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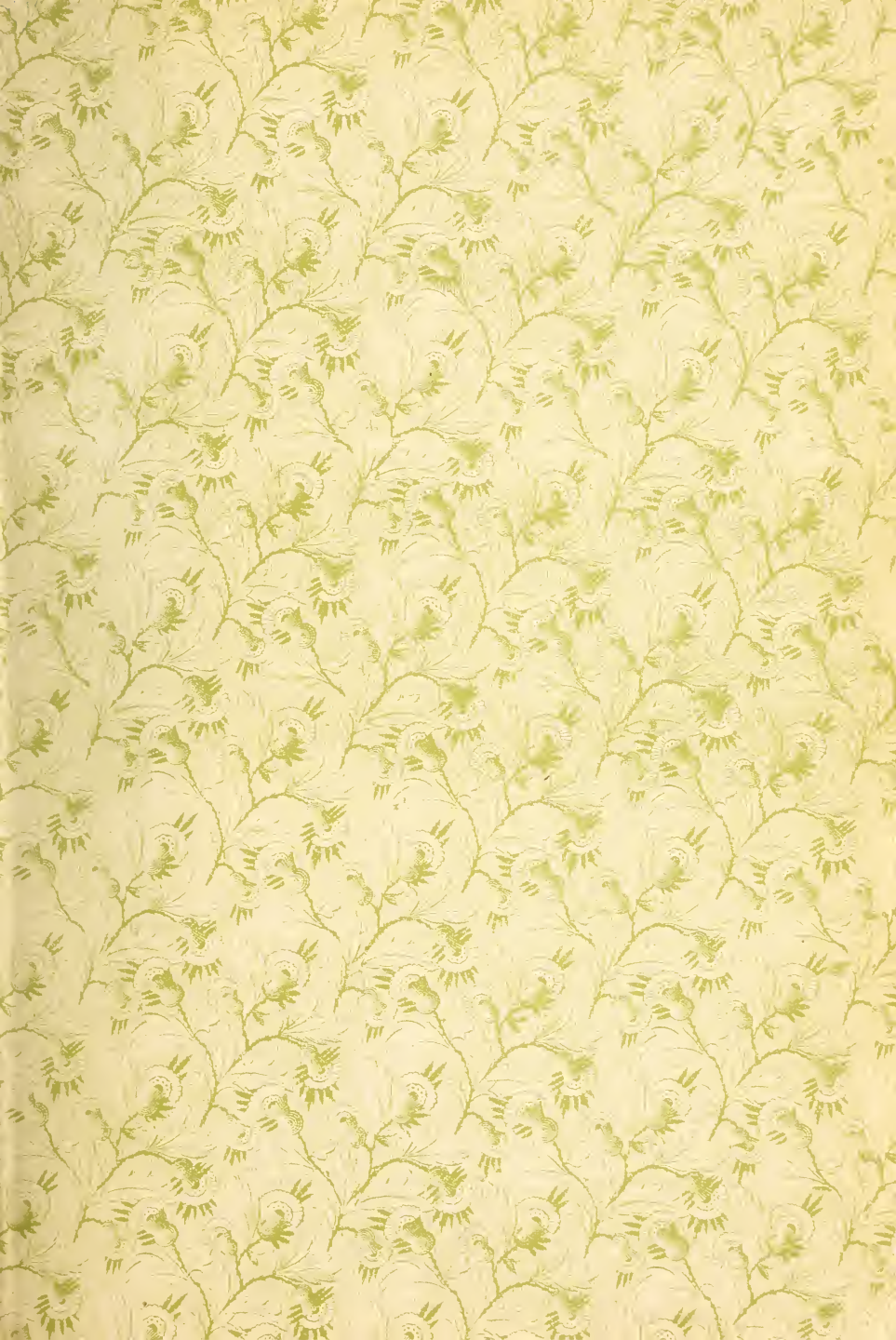
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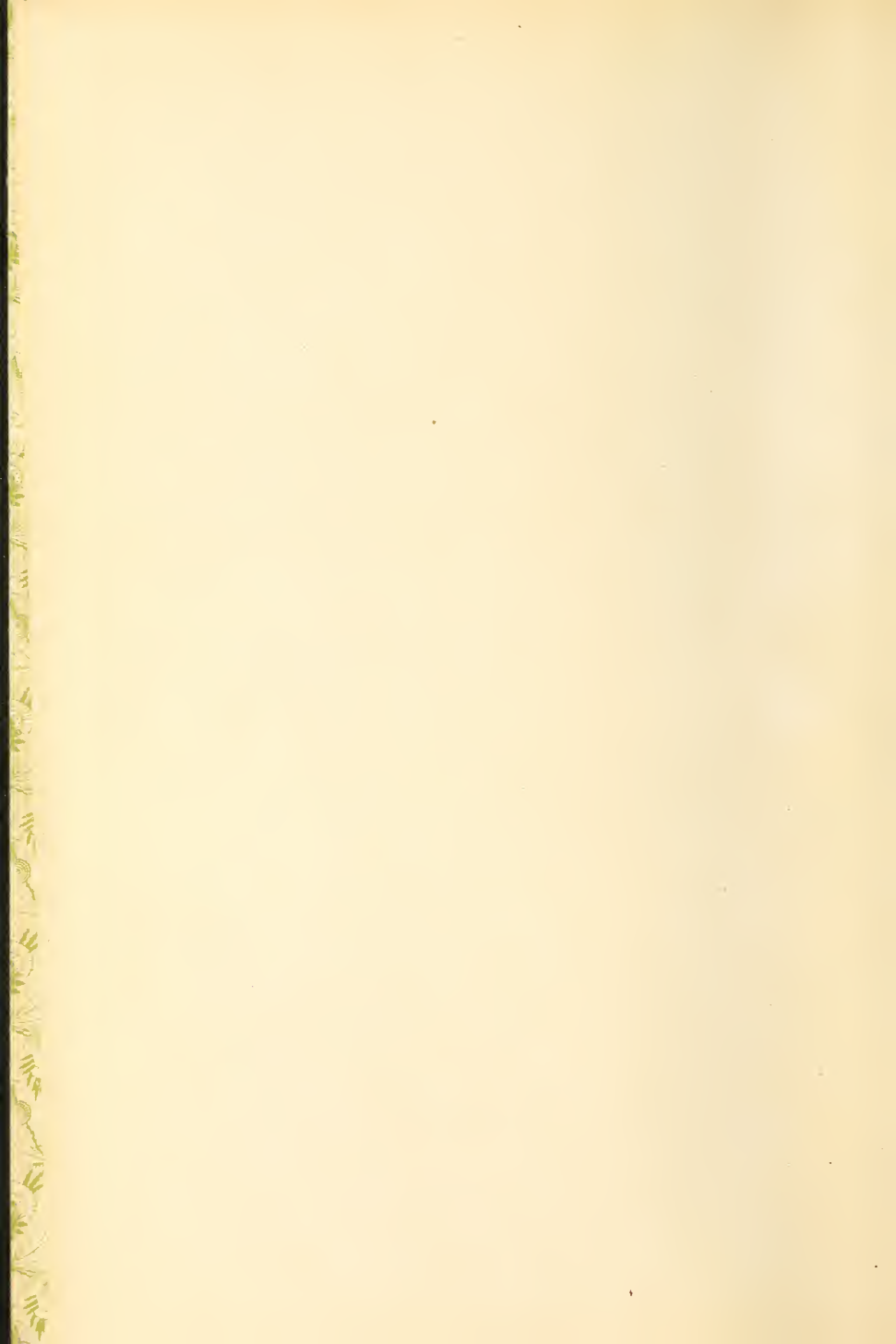
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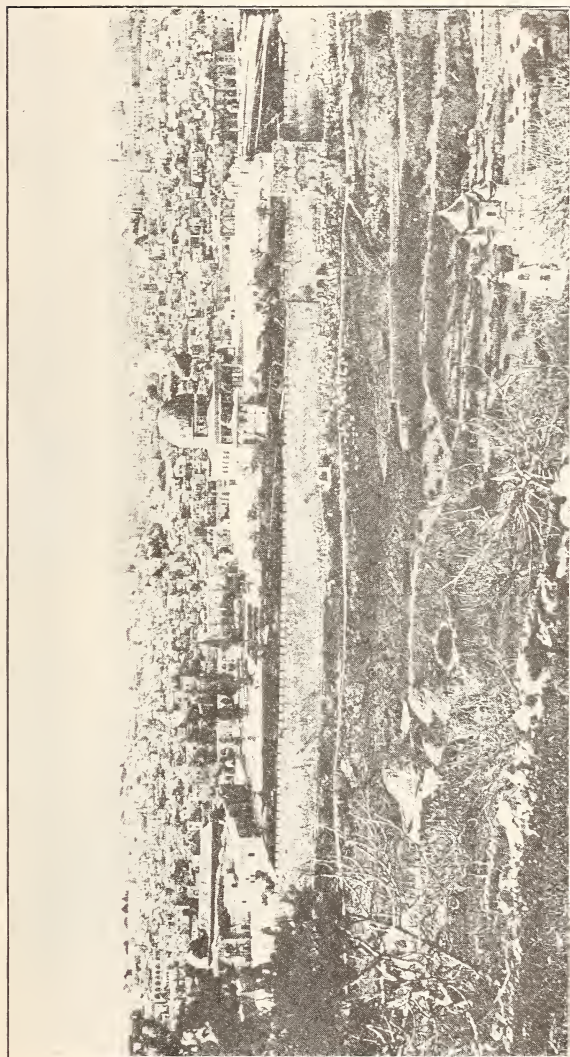












"Look Upon Zion, the City of Our Solemnities."—Isa. 33:20





MEDITATIONS  
IN  
BIBLE LANDS

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✻ ✻ *By D. A. SOMMER* ✻ ✻



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## PREFACE

FROM childhood I have loved ancient history, and always said that if I ever had the chance, I would visit the historic scenes of the ancient world, especially the lands of the Bible. A few years ago the way opened for me to go: and knowing that I should probably never get another chance to visit the historic scenes of the Old World, I determined to see all that I could which would be of value to me in my studies. We spent nearly six months on the trip, visiting Scotland, England, Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Sicily, Greece, Constantinople, Smyrna, Palestine and Egypt. The modern scenes in these places we paid little attention to, but spent our time on the points of historic interest. The student of history who tries to see in his foreign travel as much as possible with limited means, finds that six months of such effort is hard work, both physically and mentally, and he is extremely glad when it is over and his face is turned toward his native shore. The excessive use of the singular number of the pronoun of the first person, must not be taken as egotism on the part of the writer, but rather as a desire to avoid that false modesty which confuses the mind by the indiscriminate and untruthful use of the editorial "we." The illustrations in the book are nearly all taken from post-cards which were pur-

chased near the scenes they portray. I had not intended to publish an account of my travels, but after lecturing many times on Palestine, and after being asked why I did not put the talks into book form, I decided to try to make a useful volume for the people. The purpose of this little book is to throw light upon the Scriptures by what is seen in Palestine today, and to stir the heart of the reader by meditations at the places where happened the events so dear to the followers of Christ. That it may accomplish this purpose and be the means of advancing the Master's Kingdom, is the earnest prayer of the author.

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## I

### TYRE, SIDON AND DAMASCUS

WHO THAT is a student of the Bible and believes that it is the Word of God, has not longed to visit the lands where have lived the patriarchs and prophets and apostles, and where has lived and taught and died the Son of God? For two thousand years, we may safely say, that the central city of the world has been—Jerusalem. For a thousand years before Christ, it was the capital city of the Jewish nation, through whom God chose that the Messiah should be born. It was in the land of Palestine, the ancient Canaan, and in the city of Jerusalem, that occurred the greatest tragedy among men,—the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross for fallen man. It was in this city that the risen Lord said to his apostles, “All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations.” These apostles went out in obedience to their Lord, and as a result of the labors through their tongues and pens, the nations of the world are looking across at the little land and city from which their religion came. And so you wish to know something of the lands of Bible lore? Come, then, and

let us walk and muse together, among the ruins of the cities, and on the hills and in the valleys and by the lakes and streams, of those places where preached and wrote and suffered the inspired men of old.

Perhaps the logical place for us to begin our narrative is with Jerusalem and Palestine, but as our outline is Bible Lands in general, we have decided to begin with those which are remote from Canaan proper. What better plan can we pursue than to follow the Apostle Paul and visit the places he touched in his journeys, and note the things which are to be seen along the route? Let us, then, make our way to Damascus, the city near which he was converted.

Beyrout is the seaport at which you land when making your inland journey to Damascus. It was not famed in antiquity and is not mentioned in the Bible, though now it is the most important commercial town in Syria. It is situated in that narrow strip of country anciently known as Phoenicia, which lies just north of Palestine and which forms with it the extreme eastern border of the Mediterranean, or Great, Sea. The ancient Phoenicians were compelled to be a sea-going people, because the Lebanon Mountains, a few miles back from the sea, hemmed them in. Hundreds of years before Christ, the vessels of these people entered every important port of the Mediterranean Sea. It is said that they were very ingenious, and that they invented the very alphabet which I am using in

these words I am writing to you. Tyre and Sidon were the chief cities in Phoenicia, and are several times mentioned in the Old and New Testaments. Hiram was King of Tyre in the days of Solomon, and furnished him with cedar and fir trees with which to build the temple. Jesus was in the borders of Tyre and Sidon when the Syrophenician woman came to him and wished her daughter healed.

But we must start for Damascus, which is about ninety miles from Beyrout. It is well that our engine is fitted for mountain climbing, for when we reach the top of the Lebanon Mountains we are between eight and ten thousand feet above the sea, from which we have just come. Yea, at one time we even see clouds below us.

Our train pushes on through the Lebanon range of mountains, and after a while we begin to descend into a beautiful and fertile valley, on the other side of which is the range of mountains known as the Anti-Lebanon, terminating in the southeast in Mt. Hermon, more than nine thousand feet high. In this valley is the city of Baalbek, called by the Greeks Heliopolis, or city of the sun, an ancient town, but not mentioned in the Bible. It is famous today because of its magnificent ruins of ancient temples; and most visitors who come this way stop to view the remains of departed glory. Of the ruins of one of these world-renowned temples, six huge columns sixty feet high still stand, and can be seen for miles in the surrounding coun-

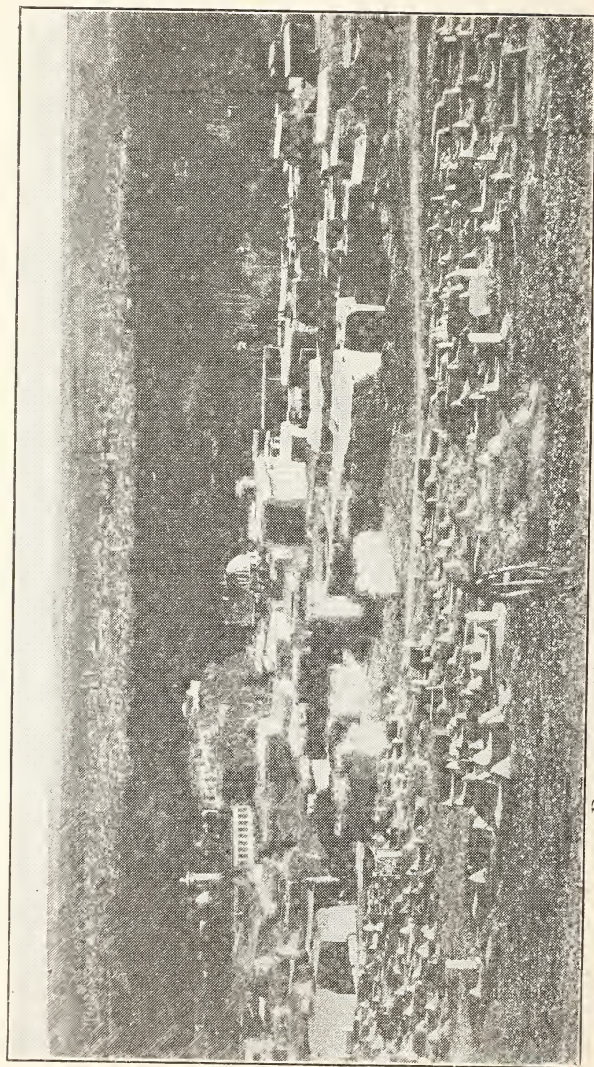
try. But the important thing about this place is the large stones in the wall which surrounds these temples. Three of these stones are about the same size, and are about sixty-four feet long, thirteen feet high and thirteen feet thick. The quarry from which they were taken is about a mile away. The weight of each of these stones is estimated at fourteen hundred tons. And a very remarkable thing is that these stones have been placed in a foundation which is already twenty-three feet high. The question comes to us, How did these people move these huge stones over a mile and elevate them into this foundation? With our steam and electricity and modern appliances, can we do that work? Perhaps we can; but I assure you that we would not consider it a small task. The fact that these people moved these gigantic stones without our modern machinery, shows that they had genius as well as we. Many think that because we have steam and electricity, and many devices which the ancients did not have, that therefore we know everything and they knew nothing. These facts, and many others such as the embalming of bodies which will keep for ages, show that after all, these people knew something. Considering the limited things with which they had to work, they seem to have been men of greater genius than those living today.

Leaving Baalbek we cross the Anti-Lebanon Mountains and descend into the plain where lies Damascus, the oldest city in the world. For fully four thousand years there has been a town of some

kind here at Damascus. Nearly two thousand years before Christ, Abraham spoke of his servant as "Eliezer of Damascus." (Gen. 15:2.) Natural location has had much to do with making Damascus a permanent city. It lies at the foot of the Anti-Lebanon range and on the western border of the great Syrian Desert, and is well watered by the streams which come down from the mountains. The word "paradise" means a park, and to the Arabs who lived in a dry and barren country, Damascus was a paradise, similar to the one which they hope to inhabit in the next world. The two rivers which flow from the mountains through Damascus making it a beautiful garden in contrast to the dry desert to the east, were in Bible times called Abana and Pharpar. These rivers are formed of the melted snow in the mountains, and so the water is clear and cool. Looking at it from a purely physical standpoint, Naaman was right when he said, "Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the rivers of Israel?" For the Jordan is a muddy stream. (2 Kings 5:12.) Many times in the Old Testament the city of Damascus is mentioned, for it was the capital of Syria, a kingdom with which the Jews had many wars.

But Damascus is more familiar to our minds because it was to this city that Saul of Tarsus was going when he was converted. Not satisfied with persecuting the Christians in Jerusalem, he obtained letters from the high priest to go unto Damascus that he might there cast into prison all that





Damascus, with Graves in the Immediate Foreground



called on the name of Jesus. (Acts 9, 22.) Yes, somewhere near this city the Lord appeared to this ardent Pharisee to make him a minister and a witness to the truth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Oh, what conviction there is in the heart of this murderer! For three days he prays unto God, no one yet having told him what to do. And now comes Ananias, a servant of God, and says, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." (Acts 22:16, R. V.) With what joy we see Paul now preaching the faith he once destroyed! He is so active that his former friends become his most bitter enemies and watch for him at the gate of the city. In speaking of this persecution and of his escape from the hands of his enemies, Paul said, "In Damascus the governor under Aretas, the king, guarded the city of the Damascenes in order to take me; and through a window was I let down in a basket by the wall, and escaped his hand." (2 Cor. 11:32.) Who of us today have incurred hatred because of our ardent advocacy of truth? It is true that we should become all things to all men in being kind in the presentation of truth, but even then many will refuse to heed God's Word. By his suffering and by his words, Paul has taught us that "all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12.)

As I walk about these old walls, I fancy I can see the hunted Paul as he makes his escape from his

furious enemies. God give us courage to speak the truth at all times, even though we may be hounded as was this apostle to the nations!

## II

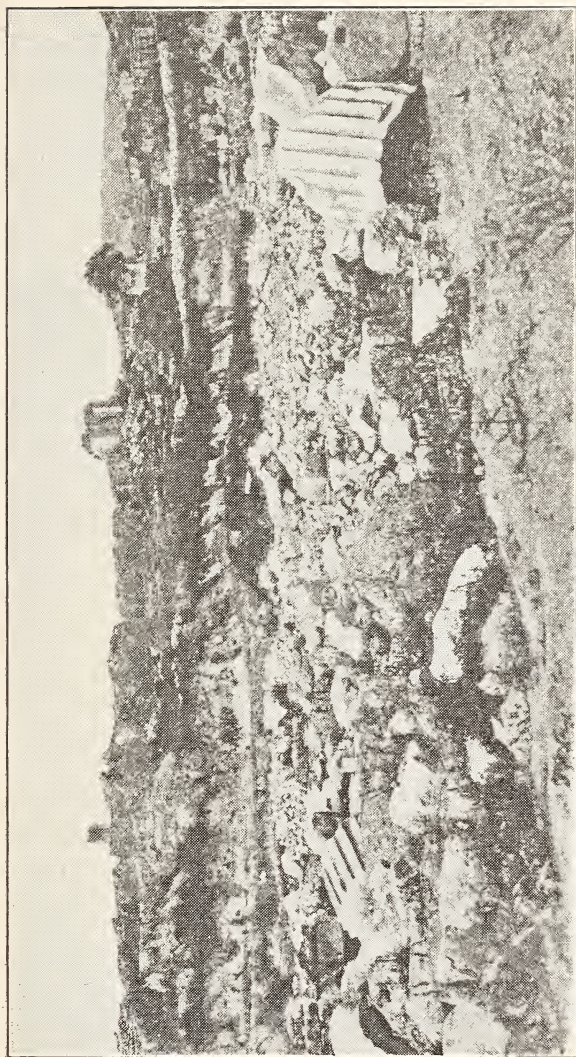
### EPHESUS

GREAT is Diana of the Ephesians! Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" cries the senseless mob; and, seizing two of Paul's companions in travel, they rush with one accord to the theater.

Such was the turbulent scene which flashed through my mind as my eyes fell upon the ruined theater of Ephesus, still clinging tenaciously to the side of a hill. How different the view now! Desolation and quietness now sway the sceptre over this once busy place. The ancients when building places of amusement nearly always took advantage of the side of a hill, so that the seats placed one behind and above another would need no support beneath. Thistles and weeds are growing over the ruins, but I scramble through and over it all, to a point behind the highest seat to read a few chapters from a little book and "view the landscape o'er." Hills shut out the scenery to some extent, but still leave me a pleasant view of the historic place. Below is a valley through which the little Cayster is winding its way toward the sea. To the

northwest lie the Aegean waters, so famous in Grecian lore. Immediately below, ruined walls, broken columns, pavements, and building stones scattered in wild confusion, tell of the former existence of a mighty city. Yes, this is the site of ancient Ephesus so famous in ancient history.

The city was a prosperous place long before the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. Being situated on the sea, and on the route between eastern and western civilization, yea, between the two great continents of Europe and Asia, she soon grew into importance and was favored by many nations. But the thing which made her most famous in ancient history was the great temple of Diana which stood in her midst, and which was admired by all as one of the wonders of the world. The people of this city favored Diana, the goddess of the chase, above all their other deities, because they believed there had fallen down to them her image from above. Though the image was a crude affair of wood, they protected it as divine, and determined to build a temple for its abode. They laid extensive foundations for this structure in a swamp, so that the building would not be ruined by an earthquake. Kings vied with one another in making presents for its erection. At last it was finished, magnificent beyond description, and received the homage of the world. Not long, however, did it enjoy this adoration, for a fanatic, desirous of becoming famous, fired the building and caused its destruction the very night in which Alexander the Great was born.



Ephesus as It Is To-day

356, B. C. Not discouraged, however, these people began again to raise a structure over the piece of wood which they thought had come down from heaven. This second great temple was not inferior to the first, for again did the rich of the earth lend a helping hand. Of the one hundred and twenty-seven magnificent columns placed into the temple, each was given by a king. Thousands came from foreign lands to view and revere this wonder of the world. That the devotees at this temple may have something to take away with them as mementos, silver shrines are made by Demetrius and his fellow-workers and sold to the devout people. By this business much gain is brought to these workers. But about this time appears a man on the scene whose teachings endanger their craft. He is teaching that there is only one God, and that idols are senseless things unable to help their worshipers. For two years this man works diligently propagating the doctrines of his Lord. No wonder that many turn to him, for astonishing miracles are performed! No wonder that they leave unbought the silver shrines of Demetrius! Seeing that something must be done this silversmith calls together his fellow-craftsmen, and announces to them that the teachings of Paul are causing this falling off in their trade, and that soon even the great temple of Diana will be despised and her magnificence be destroyed. Aroused by the inflammatory speech of their leader, the workmen soon stir up the city and cause the excitement



which endangers Paul's life. When the crowd rushes into the theater, some crying one thing and some another, Paul desires to enter to allay their feelings; but on the entreaty of the disciples he does not thus endanger himself. The town clerk knowing that the mob must be dispersed, enters the theater and talks to the people, warning them against any rash actions, and showing them the foolishness of what they had done. Being pacified by the words of this officer, the assembly disperses. Yes, these ruins now before me, are, no doubt, the remains of that theater into which Paul's companions were dragged and into which he himself was persuaded not to go. How real it all seems as I sit here and read of the stirring events in the life of this inspired man!

How glad we are to know that opposition to the gospel at this place was of little avail! True, many refused to accept the teachings of Jesus, still hundreds were turned to the Lord. Not only in this city but throughout all these regions were the glad tidings sent forth. The repentance on the part of some was so great that they brought their works on the curious arts and burned them before the people.

But opposition against the church was not always to come from without. The enemies of the cross were not to be found among the open opposers alone of Christ's religion. Paul, knowing this, when he was passing that way on his journey to Jerusalem, stopped at Miletus, where his vessel

anchored, and called for the elders of the Ephesian church to come to him. I fancy I see these bishops, going gladly to Miletus to see him who had planted their feet upon the faith of the gospel of Christ. But their gladness is mingled with fear as they are reminded of their responsibility and the trying scenes which are yet to come. "Take heed, therefore," says Paul, "unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." "When he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they should see his face no more."

As my eyes still rest upon these ruins, my thoughts still linger about the church established here. The elders return from the sea-shore where they had received the parting words of Paul, continue their work for a little while, then drop from the stage of action to give place to others. The apostles, too, have now all gone, save one banished to yon lonely isle. Things have

changed in the church at Ephesus, for its zeal has passed away. Well indeed have they withstood the wrecking hand of the false teacher, not bearing "them who are evil." For Christ's sake they have labored and not fainted. But from this rocky isle comes the voice of the Master through John, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly and remove thy candlestick out of his place."

How many Ephesian churches have we in our own native land today! How many churches which have theoretically kept the faith, yet have left their first love! How many churches which have knowledge, yet which lack zeal! Your Master is warning you to turn again, lest he remove your candlestick from before his face.

### III

## CORINTH

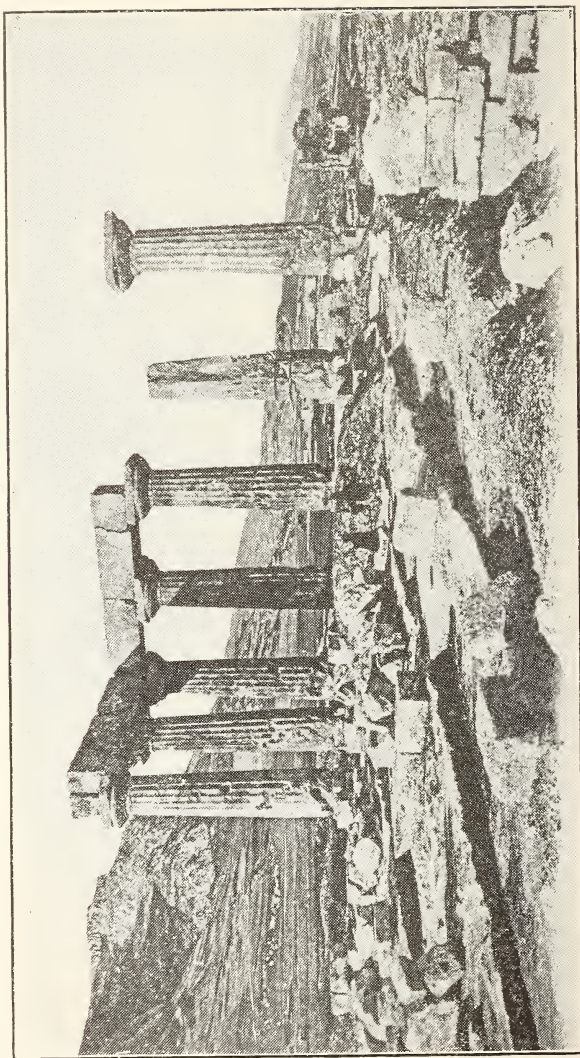
**A**FTER preaching the gospel in Asia Minor, we see Paul making his way into Greece, the center of learning in those days. The great city of Corinth is the one to which we now see him going to tell the story of Jesus.

This city was founded many centuries before the Christian era, and grew prosperous early because of her favorable situation. Near her on the north is the Corinthian Gulf, and near her on the east is the Aegean Sea, separated from each other by the Isthmus of Corinth, which bodies of water are now connected by a canal. In former days little vessels were dragged across this narrow strip of land. Besides being situated on the route between the east and the west, she was so located that land traffic between Macedonia and other districts on the north, and Sparta and Olympia and other cities of Greece on the south, must pass through her. Soon she became important; soon she became mistress among the cities of Greece.

But in the vicissitudes of time this city suffered much. Some of the wars carried on between the

rival states of Greece made her territory the battle field, bringing ruin to her vine-covered fields; and in the days of Roman supremacy, rebellion being found in her heart, she was razed to the ground. A century came and went, during which time the city lay in desolation. Then Caesar, a few years before Christ, realizing the importance of her situation, re-founded the town and started Corinth into a new era of prosperity. This city, rebuilt by Julius Caesar, was the town of the days of Christ and the apostles. During the Middle Ages, Corinth was a prosperous place; but tribulation coming again, she fell into the hands of the Turks, then Venetians, then Turks again. Broken pieces of pillars, ruined stair-cases, a few monolithic columns still supporting an entablature, and a few scattered remains of a theater, tell of the activity and ability of a once-prosperous people.

But a love of scenery impels me to climb to the top of yonder acropolis, the fort of ancient Corinth, nearly two thousand feet above the sea. The task is hard and the day is hot, but the view on the highest point fully repays for the toil. Mediaeval walls, still sturdy in appearance, and the ruins of chapels and other buildings, are seen here and there. After pushing along among weeds and burrs, and picking my way among the ruins, I finally come to a point where a magnificent view is obtained, a view far-famed even in antiquity. To the south are the barren hills of Peloponessus, beyond which lay the city of Sparta. To the west,



Corinth, with the Acropolis in the Distance



lies a treeless chain of mountains. To the north, in the immediate foreground stretches the site of ancient Corinth with the ruins of her temple plainly visible. Farther away the bright waters of the Gulf of Corinth are seen; and looming up behind them, Mt. Parnassus and her many sisters raise their heads. To the east can be seen the waters of the Aegean Sea, beyond which lies Attica, with Athens discernible on a clear day. What a place to sit to enjoy the scenery after a hard struggle up the mountain! What a place, too, for musing on the events of centuries past!

As my mind wanders back through the ages that are gone, I fancy I see a man making his way across the isthmus to the mighty city which seems to be stretched before me. He is setting forth a new doctrine, and is now coming from Athens, where upon a hill he had made known his teaching. He has left some in that city believing the doctrine he presented; and, being a man zealous for his Master, he is now on his way to Corinth to present the same lessons. What a picture of zeal is portrayed by this man's actions in this city! He reasons with the Jews out of their Scriptures, and talks with the Greeks about the One who had sent him out to announce the glad tidings of salvation. Meeting a man there of like occupation he toils with him, with his own hands making tents for his bread that he might be an example to his followers. The chief ruler of the synagogue believes the new doctrine; and many others, hearing, believe and

are baptized; and Paul, the great apostle of Christ, rejoices at the success of the gospel. Many, however, will not hear the new doctrine, and being jealous of the success of Paul they raise an insurrection and drag him before the judgment seat. Being turned away unhurt and untrammelled, he continues to make known Christ and him crucified. For many months he abides in this city, turning many from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them who are sanctified through faith in Christ Jesus our Lord. Oh, what a glorious work has been accomplished. for in this city has been established a church of the Lord Jesus! With gladness I fancy I see him turn to other parts of the Lord's vineyard.

But look, these people who have been called together out of the world, and have been taught lessons of love and righteousness, are now divided among themselves, and are causing weak ones to offend against God, and are tolerating a fornicator in their midst! Paul, far away, hears of their troubles, and writes them at once. His two letters to the brethren at Corinth have been read and obeyed, not only by many of the Corinthians but by millions of people who have never seen the city or site of Corinth. Eternity alone can tell the influence these letters have had on the teeming millions of the world. These brethren at Corinth love the one who has begotten them in the Lord, and they try to correct the abuses which have

arisen among them. Would that all who have wandered away from the teachings of inspired men were as willing to return as were these Christians at Corinth!

But the vision of the infant church and its inspired founder fades from my sight, and I find that I must hasten away if I would reach my lodging-place by night.

## ATHENS

**A**THENS was one of the greatest cities of antiquity. Some ancient cities might have led in one thing and some in another, but Athens certainly led the world in philosophy and art. The origin of the city itself is wrapped somewhat in obscurity. Theseus seems to have been the first ruler of any importance, being the first one to bring together the several states of Attica. As the centuries passed by, the importance of Athens, and, in fact, of the rest of Greece, showed the world that a mighty power had arisen. In the fifth century before Christ, the Persians decided to bring this little independent country under the power of the East. So Darius, with two hundred thousand men, swept down into Greece. Feeling that somebody must take the lead Athens stepped boldly to the front, and with the aid which her sister states gave, defeated the common enemy on the field of Marathon. The Persians, not satisfied, tried their fortune again, this time obtaining possession of the city until the naval engagement at Salamis, when they retreated again toward

their own country. Athens now had nothing to fear from the foreign enemy, and the prominence she had taken in the Persian wars raised her to the highest position among the states of Greece. Now began a period of prosperity unequalled before. The fortifications were made stronger; the Long Walls sixty feet high reaching to Piræus, their fort, four or five miles away, were built; philosophers thronged the streets; and magnificent temples which have been the wonder of the world from an artistic view, were erected. In the course of time, however, rivalry sprang up among the different states of Greece, and Athens suffered much from the hand of war. The Romans, too, obtained possession of the city and held her under their power. Centuries have come and gone, and with the rise and fall of empires, have changed the ruling power of Athens. She is now the capital of her country, but is chiefly noted among the nations for the magnificent ruins which she still contains.

If there ever was a religious city certainly Athens was one, her gods and goddesses being almost innumerable. On the streets were statues of gods, in the market places were statues of gods, and in the temples were statues of gods. There were so many images in this city that a Roman satirist said that it was easier to find a god here than a man. When we see these Athenians seeking God through their poetry and philosophy, and yet not finding Him, we remember that Paul has said

that "the world through its wisdom knew not God."

These art-loving Athenians erected many temples to their deities. The acropolis, a rocky eminence in the city, was originally a fort, but was afterwards made a sanctuary for the gods. Upon this point were built temples which have been models to the world in art. The Parthenon, even after the lapse of 2,300 years, and the destruction wrought by the hand of man, remains a wonder to all who behold it. Phidias, perhaps the greatest sculptor that ever lived, did his best work upon this magnificent building. The temple of Victory, the Propylaea, and other structures, reveal the skill and devotion of these people.

In philosophy as well as art did these people lead the world. The slaves which they had did the work, while they gave themselves to pursuits of the mind. They would meet in the market places or on the streets and discuss any subject which might arise. They spent their time in trying to learn something newer than the new. Some of these philosophers have been the greatest thinkers that ever lived. The morality taught by Socrates has been unsurpassed except by that of the great Teacher himself, and the thoughts of this philosopher's pupils, Plato and Aristotle, ruled the world for nearly 2,000 years. But it is the teaching of the Epicureans and the Stoics which interest us most as Bible students. The former sect was founded by Epicurus, who taught that tranquil

pleasure is the highest end of human existence. Like the French revolutionists, this sect taught that there is no resurrection, that death is an eternal sleep, and that there is no future punishment or reward. Some might believe such doctrines, and yet live moral lives, but not so with the great majority. "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die," they cried, and plunged themselves into pleasure and vice.

"Live while you live, the Epicure would say,  
And seize the pleasures of the present day."

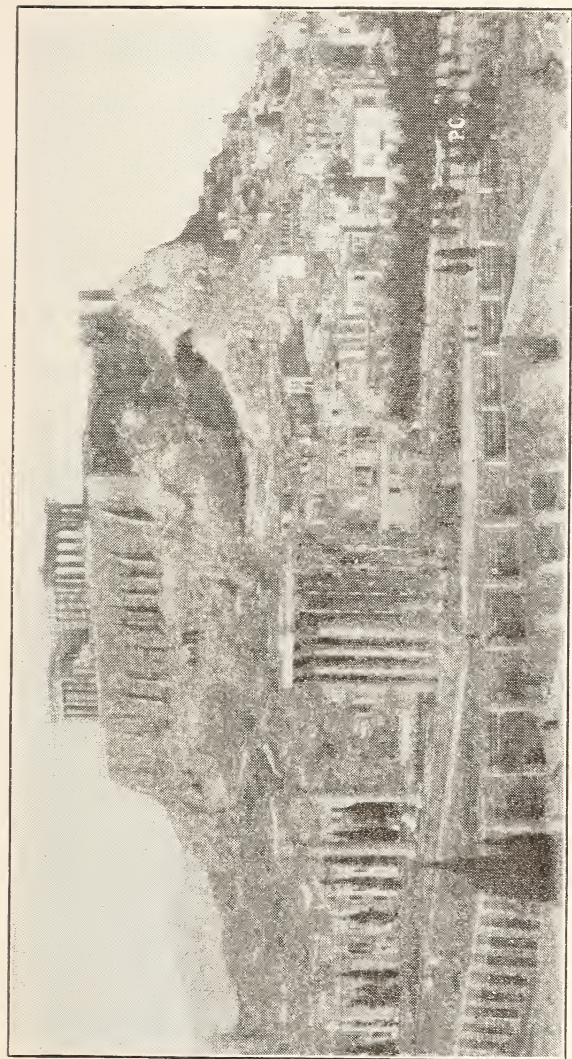
The doctrines of the Stoics were somewhat different. They were opposed to anything which would appeal to the feelings, and claimed to be governed by reason alone. They denounced the beautiful temples and other works of art, yet at the same time worshiped the gods above. If good fortune came to them, they were not to rejoice; if adversity, they were not to repine. Plutarch, when told that his child had died, replied by simply saying that he never thought that he had begotten an immortal. Though these doctrines—some of them—seem foolish, still they controlled many bright minds, and did much for the morality of the world.

After visiting these temples, monuments and theaters, which have stood for so many hundreds of years, I sit down, near the close of the day, at a monument on a hill near the city, to think of past scenes. Hills are to the north, to the east,



and to the south, now barren, though once well wooded. To the west is the sea, beyond which can be seen the land of Sparta. In the immediate foreground to the northeast is the acropolis, with its magnificent ruins, appearing all the more beautiful when kissed by the parting rays of the setting sun. My mind goes back nearly two thousand years, and incidents, familiar to us all, arise. Paul, the apostle of Jesus the Christ, has preached in Thessalonica, but they will not hear his word. In Berea, however, he finds better soil, for they receive the word with readiness of mind. His enemies at Thessalonica come to Berea and stir up persecution, so that Paul leaves, turning his face toward Athens. Yes, here he comes into this idolatrous city, to make known the only true God.

As Paul's custom is, he goes first to the Jews and tells them of Jesus. His spirit being stirred within him at their idolatry, he reasons in the market-places with the philosophers of the Epicurean and Stoic schools. In their pride they look down upon him, calling him a babbler. When he speaks of Jesus and the resurrection, they fancy he is a proclaimer of strange gods. They then bring him to the court which assembles on Mars Hill, and give him an opportunity to make known there his doctrines. Thinking of the shrines, the images, and the temples which met his eyes as he passed through the city, he lifts his voice and



Ruins in Athens of Temples, Which Stirred Paul's Spirit

makes known the doctrines of the great Jehovah, from whom all blessings come,—

“Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious. For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, To AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you. The God that made the world and all things therein, he being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is served by men’s hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation: that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain of your own poets have said, For we are his offspring. Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man. The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now commandeth that they should all everywhere repent; inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead.” (Acts 17, R. V.)

What a wonderful speech is this, striking at the very root of idolatry! Some cleave unto Paul, believing the doctrines he presented, but the great majority filled with pride because of the learning in their nation, turn away with disdain. How like these people are many today who, when filled with earthly wisdom, forsake or neglect the simple teachings of Jesus of Nazareth!

## PAUL'S TRIP TO ROME

MALTA, SYRACUSE, RHEGIUM, PUTEOLI, MT. VESUVIUS AND POMPEII.

ONE OF the most interesting journeys recorded in the New Testament, is that of the Apostle Paul to the city of Rome. When he saw that in his difficulties with the Jews, he would not receive justice in his own land where the Roman judges would be influenced by the Jewish mobs, he said, "I appeal to Caesar." He did not go to Rome as a free man, but as a prisoner bound for Jesus Christ. After journeying part of the way in one ship, Paul was transferred with other prisoners to a ship bound directly for Italy. When going from one port to another at the island of Crete, they were caught by a fierce storm and blown far out to sea. For fourteen days they were driven up and down that part of the sea at the mercy of the winds and waves, during which time they ate nothing, for they expected any moment to be their last. Finally, in fulfillment of the prediction of Paul, the vessel

was wrecked and all reached the shore alive by swimming or floating on pieces of the broken ship. The island upon which they were cast was called Melita, now Malta, and lies just south of the island of Sicily.

After three months they resumed their journey toward Rome. Their route led them along the east coast of Sicily through the Strait of Messina which separates the island from Italy. For three days they tarried at Syracuse, a very prominent Grecian city. I say Grecian, for the city had been built by the Greeks. Through several hundred years before Christ, the Greeks did much colonizing. The island of Sicily was one of their most prominent possessions, and the southern part of Italy was so filled with Greek cities that it was called Magna Graecia (Great Greece.) At the height of its prosperity, Syracuse contained no less than half a million inhabitants.

As Paul sailed northward along the coast of Sicily, he obtained a fine view of Mt. Aetna, the loftiest volcano in Europe. It is more than 10,000 feet high, covers 460 square miles, and is 90 miles in circumference at its base. From the earliest ages this mountain has been known as a volcano, and has wrought great damage to life and property in times past. As one passes at the foot of the mountain today, he sees houses, gardens, trees and vineyards, far up its slopes. Perhaps it was as quiet when Paul viewed it from his ship as it is today, when the tourist views it from the train.



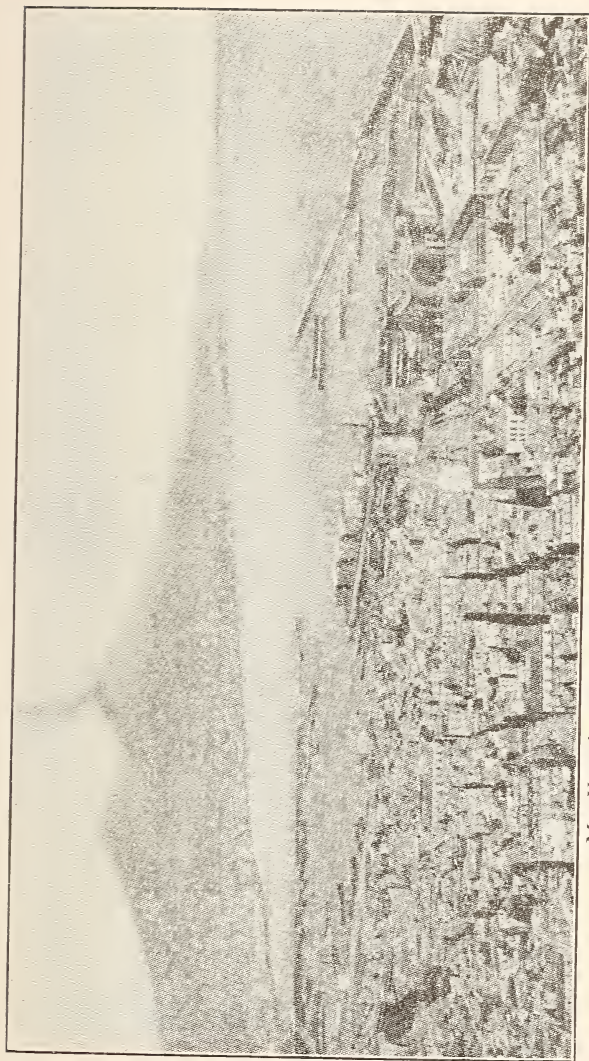
Continuing his journey to the north, Paul found himself in a day or two in the Strait of Messina, with the city of Messina on the Sicilian shore, and Rhegium, now Reggio, on the Italian shore. The poet Homer represents his hero, Ulysses, as sailing through this strait, a thousand years before Paul, in the midst of great dangers. The rock, Scylla, on the Italian side, he depicts as a beautiful virgin above, and a monster with a wolf's body and dolphin's tail below: and the whirlpool, Charybdis, on the Sicilian side, he describes as a woman enticing the mariners to their destruction. From this bit of mythology, we get the proverb, "To sail between Scylla and Charybdis," meaning, to pass through difficulties or dangers from opposite sides. The two cities, Messina and Rhegium, at the latter of which the apostle stopped, have both been recently destroyed by an earthquake, in which millions of dollars worth of property were destroyed and thousands of lives were lost.

The next point at which Paul stopped in his journey to Rome was Puteoli, situated on the northern border of the Gulf of Naples, and the principal depot for the traffic with Egypt and the East. As Paul sailed into this port, he could see Mt. Vesuvius, the most noted volcano in the world, and perhaps could get a glimpse of Pompeii, one of the cities which was destroyed a few years after his journey. This volcano is about 4,000 feet high, and has been a great sore to Italy, sending forth its lava and ashes for many hundreds of years,

devastating the country, destroying lives, and terrorizing the people who were not killed. The most noted eruption was in the year 79 A. D. when Pompeii, Herculaneum, Stabiae and other cities of this beautiful district were entirely covered with the ashes. For about 1,600 years these cities were entirely lost sight of, but within the past two hundred years excavations have been made which have unearthed these cities just as they were when destroyed. The ancient city of Pompeii which has been awakened out of the ashes, is one of the most interesting spots in the world, for it gives one a better idea of the ancient Roman cities than anything else which has come down to us. There we can see the houses just as they were in the year 79 when the ashes covered the city. There are the narrow stone streets with the ruts made in them by the wagons, just as they were in the first century. The theater has been preserved almost whole, where the populace gathered to witness the plays and contests of two thousand years ago. The temple, too, where the religious people worshiped their gods is as conspicuous as church buildings today. Tombs and monuments are scattered along some of the roads on the outside of the city. Some watering troughs for the beasts of burden are at the intersection of some of the streets, and drinking fountains for the people are scattered here and there. The mosaics are upon the walls and floors just as they were when the city was covered, telling of the artistic ability

and licentious taste of the immoral inhabitants of the place. Although the weight of the ashes in the destruction of the city broke down the buildings somewhat, still everything else is just as it was when the frightened people fled from the place. The fountains in some of the atria, or open courts, of the buildings have been put into operation again, and play as lively as when the Roman soldier ruled the world. As one passes along these streets, looking into these temples and theaters and private buildings, he can imagine as nowhere else perhaps in all the earth, that he is living in the ancient world. It was into cities built like this that the Apostle Paul went to tell the story of Jesus and to convert the people from their evil ways.

But we can not leave this country without taking a trip up to the top of Mt. Vesuvius. After a ride in a carriage of several hours from Naples, we change to an electric car; and finally, when we have reached the limit of its ability to climb the hill, we take the wire-rope railway, and ascend to a point several hundred feet from the top. As we pass along we see that there is every indication of great fertility. We are now at a place where the lava is coming red hot from the bowels of the earth. We look into a fissure in the mountain side as into a great furnace. The guide has to restrain continually our curiosity, lest we go too close and burn our shoes as we walk over the hardened lava. Finally, we make the last move



Mt. Vesuvius and the Bay of Naples, Into Which Paul Sailed

for the top. Through ashes we wearily wade and climb, until we reach the crater, more than 4,000 feet above the sea. About once a minute there is an explosion in which rocks are hurled out of the crater to a great height; and it is between the explosions that we run up and peep down for a few seconds into the great opening. All we can see is smoke and steam rising; and on the other side of the crater at the lowest point we can see cones of ashes, perhaps a hundred feet high. When one sees these effects of a mighty power in the earth so superior to man's, he realizes his own littleness.

When a person views this volcano from the water at night, it presents a beautiful appearance. The smoke and steam are continually rolling from it as from a furnace, and the explosions at regular intervals, lighten the smoke and the clouds which may be passing by, giving them the appearance of fire; and this furnace in the heavens, reflected in the waters beneath, present a picture never to be forgotten. Perhaps this volcano was as restless in Paul's day as it is now, when he sailed across the Bay of Naples with the mountain in full view, and cast anchor in the port of Puteoli.

Paul tarried in Puteoli among the brethren seven days, and then resumed his journey to Rome. When the disciples in that great city learned Paul was coming, they came out to meet him; and the faithfulness of their discipleship caused the apostle

to thank God and take courage. Thus did this great messenger of God to the Gentiles find himself in the capital of the Roman empire.



## VI

### ROME

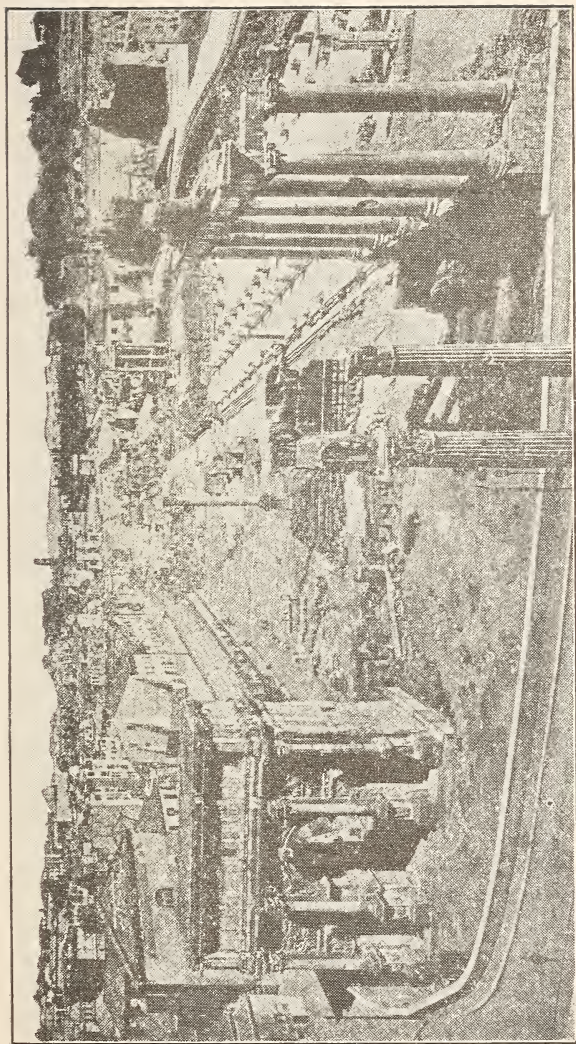
THE early history of Rome is clouded somewhat in obscurity. The city is said to have been established in 754 B. C. by Romulus, and after many changes through seven centuries the little village grew to be the mistress of the world. One by one the petty nations of the Italian peninsula had to bow to the superior power of the rising Roman state, until at last they were united in a solid nation and ready to go out to conquer the world. It was Julius Cæsar who lived a few years before Christ that did the most for Rome by the way of conquering nations outside of Italy. He conquered Gaul (now France), Britain, and some other countries east of the Mediterranean Sea; and these conquests with the ones which were made with the other noted warriors, made the Roman empire almost synonymous with the world. Previous to the days of Julius Cæsar, the Roman people had been banded together in a republic; but the unprecedented success of this general in foreign fields which gave him a name above all others, and the power of his legions which was greater than

that of his rivals, raised him to the position of sole ruler in the Roman empire. From his day on, the simplicity and republicanism which had made Rome what she was, were put aside, and luxury and despotism reigned.

Some of these despots, however, were great builders, and some of them were good men seeking the peace and prosperity of the people. Great and magnificent temples and other public and private buildings, roads, aqueducts, etc., were erected by the emperors, the ruins of which have come down to the present time, telling us of the grandeur and greatness of this ancient city. After Rome had reached the height of its power and glory in the first century, it took several centuries for it to fall to pieces. The legions of this great empire were never idle very long at a time, for nearly every year there was a revolt of some kind among the border nations of the unwieldy government. Finally, the barbarians became more bold in their attacks on Rome as they saw her growing weaker through her excess of wealth: and after many struggles of the dying empire for several centuries, she sank down in the fifth century under the superior physical force of the hordes which swept down from the north. From the ruins of the Roman empire have sprung the modern countries of Europe through many changes in the centuries, and each one of them has derived much of its language, law and culture from this government of iron.

One of the remarkable things of history is that though the Roman empire was dissolved, another Roman empire sprang up from its ruins. When pagan Rome lost her power, then papal Rome, the Roman Catholic Church, assumed to herself the authority of the former. As pagan Rome had ruled the world, so the great apostasy from the Church of Christ assumed to herself the sovereignty of the souls, yea, and afterwards, even the bodies of men. From the fifth and sixth centuries there has existed that which is known in history as the Holy Roman Empire. These two great empires are the subjects of prophecy in both the Old and New Testaments.

When the city of Rome was destroyed by the barbarians, many of the buildings were partially torn or burnt down, and the parts which were not destroyed were covered with rubbish and have remained hidden for fifteen centuries. In recent times the houses which have been built on these ruins have been removed, excavations have been made, and many things of interest and value to the student of ancient history have been brought to light. Temples, private houses, public buildings, statues, arches of triumph, monumental columns, and forums where some of the greatest speeches in the world have been made, have been unearthed, and have been given something of the appearance they had in the palmy days of Rome's supremacy. The lover of Roman history can profitably spend days loitering in these old ruins with his books in



The Roman Forum

his hand, identifying the particular places, and studying and meditating upon the great events which have happened here.

There is one of these relics of antiquity which is of especial interest to the Bible student. The Arch of Titus is undoubtedly a witness for the credibility of the New Testament. It was Titus and his father Vespasian who carried on the war against the Jews, and destroyed their city in 70 A. D.: and this arch commemorates their victory in this war. On the inside of this arch is a fine relief of the triumphal procession with captive Jews, the table of show-bread, and the candlestick with seven branches. These stones tell us of the very events foretold by Jesus, and thus do they strengthen us in our confidence in Jesus as divine.

On the outside of Rome are the catacombs which have an interesting history for Christians. These catacombs are subterranean passageways with open rooms here and there. They were originally burial places, but in the times of persecution, the Christians betook themselves to them to escape the hand of the persecutor. These catacombs are in the hands of the Roman Catholics, who of course make sacred ground out of them, and attach their traditions to the places.

It is interesting to the Protestant to study Roman Catholicism in Rome, the place of its birth. A few centuries after Christ the bishop of Rome began to think that special prominence should be given to him because, as he said, the



apostles Peter and Paul both suffered martyrdom there. It is, however, a matter of doubt as to Peter's ever having been in Rome. They conveniently make this the place of his martyrdom so that they can apply to themselves the language of Christ to Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," etc., forgetting that practically the same language was used to the other apostles. (John 20:22, 23.) These people claim that St. Peter's church is built over the bones of the apostle Peter. This cathedral is the largest and grandest in the world. At the end of the seventeenth century, it had cost \$50,000,000, and no doubt much more expense has been added to it in the past two centuries. It was the selling of indulgences in Germany to procure money to help in the work on this building which started the fires of the Reformation. Joining St. Peter's are the Vatican buildings where lives the pope, "the man of sin," who "sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God." (2 Thess. 2:3, 4.) The Vatican museum is one of the finest in the world, and should be visited by every lover of ancient things. In the entrance hall to the Sistine chapel are frescoe paintings, among which are scenes from the night of St. Bartholomew, which formerly had under them the inscription *Strages Huguenottorum* (Slaughter of the Huguenots). Thus did the popes glorify in art their horrible butchery of tens of thousands of Protestants in France. The Roman Catholic Church is not dif-



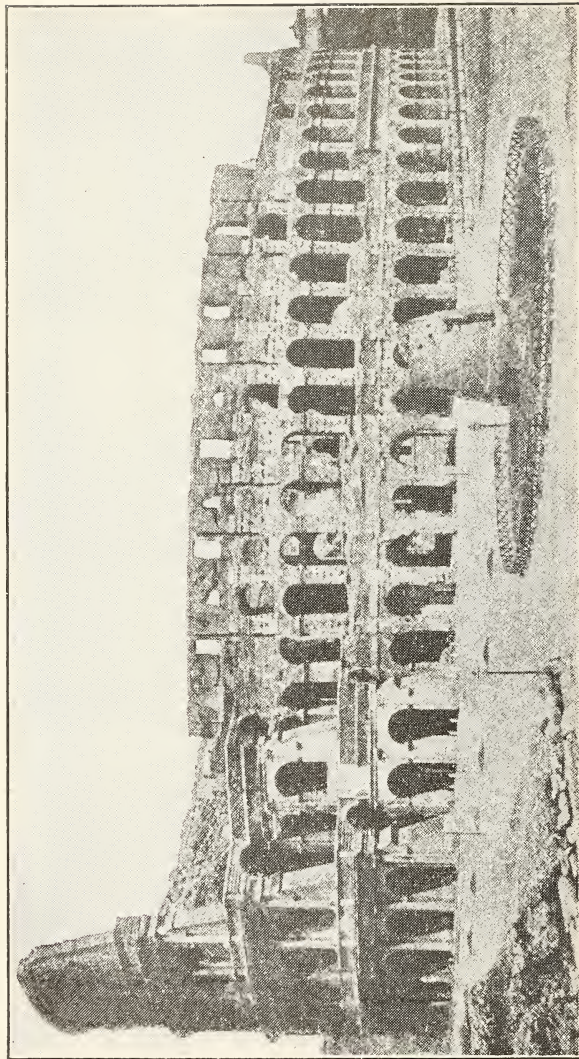
ferent now from what she was when she ordered this wholesale slaughter, and she would do the same thing today against "heretics", if she dared. She is opposed to religious and political freedom, and is the enemy of every free government. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

## VII

### THE COLOSSEUM AT ROME

THE COLOSSEUM at Rome is the largest theater in the world, and one of the most imposing structures which has come down to us from ancient times. It was finished about the year 80 A. D. by Titus, and was inaugurated with gladiatorial contests lasting one hundred days, in which 6,000 beasts were slain and in which naval contests were exhibited in the arena. There are four stories in the building reaching to a height of 157 feet, and the external circumference of it is about a third of a mile. The arena is about 275 feet long and 175 feet wide. About 50,000 people could look down upon the contests going on in the arena below. Although two-thirds of the structure have disappeared, the ruins are still wonderfully impressive. Nothing which has come down to us from the palmy days of Rome tells us better of her ancient grandeur.

As the Christian stands in this arena, when quietness reigns and darkness mingles with light, a strange sadness comes over him. Upon those seats once sat the Roman populace looking down with



The Colosseum, Where Many Christians Sealed Their Faith With Their Blood

pleasure upon the bloody scene in the arena below. Out of those doors once sprang the wild beasts to devour the victims standing almost helpless before them. In the first, second and third centuries, many of those victims were the followers of the lowly Nazarene. Yes, it is true, that these very sands have been moistened with the blood of those who sealed their faith in Jesus with their lives. And not only here, but also throughout the city, and even throughout the Roman empire, the followers of Christ gave their lives for his sake.

My mind goes back to the Church of Christ in its infancy, and I think of its many struggles. I see the great Apostle to the Gentiles in his fight for truth and righteousness, and in his sufferings for Jesus' sake. He commences to tell the story of Jesus in the very city to which he had started to destroy the Christians, and his former friends become his enemies and watch for him at the gate of the city. By being let down by the wall in a basket, he escapes their hands. I see him in Arabia telling the same story of Christ and him crucified. Now he is in Antioch and Iconium and Lystra, and the Jews refuse to hear his words. At the last place they stone him, drag him out of the city, and leave him for dead. At Philippi they beat him and thrust him into the inner prison and put his feet into the stocks. But instead of pining, he sings praises unto God, remembering that Jesus had said, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against

you falsely for my sake; rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets who were before you." On Mars Hill he tells the people of the one true God, but only a few will listen to him. Now he is at Corinth establishing a church in that voluptuous city, working at the same time with his own hands. Finally, I see him at Jerusalem, wrested by the officers from the hands of the seething mob, and hear him say in his trial, "I appeal unto Cæsar." But the journey to Rome is a disastrous one to the ship on which he is traveling. A great storm sweeps down upon them, and for fourteen days and nights they are driven with the fierce wind, and finally wrecked and thrown upon an island. From Malta I see him coming north past Syracuse and Rhegium to Puteoli, and then to Rome itself. Here he is now in the capital of the Roman empire, preaching the gospel in his own hired house, and waiting for the time when he should be offered by the cruel hand of persecution as a sacrifice to his God.

As he looks back over his life, he thinks of the many things he has endured for the name of Jesus, and says, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from my countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in

perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren: in labor and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is caused to stumble, and I burn not?"

Now while the apostle is living such a life as this, a life of devotion and sacrifice for the name of Jesus, a life of suffering and toil for the gospel's sake, does he consider that he is alone in the work? Because men have forsaken him, does he think that God has forsaken him, too? Does he believe that because he has been conquered physically by men, therefore he has been spiritually and eternally cast aside by God? Or does he rather believe that in the midst of all his persecutions and death for Jesus' name, he is more than a conqueror through him that loved him? Listen to his words of defiance to all the enemies of the cross of Jesus, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Even as it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor

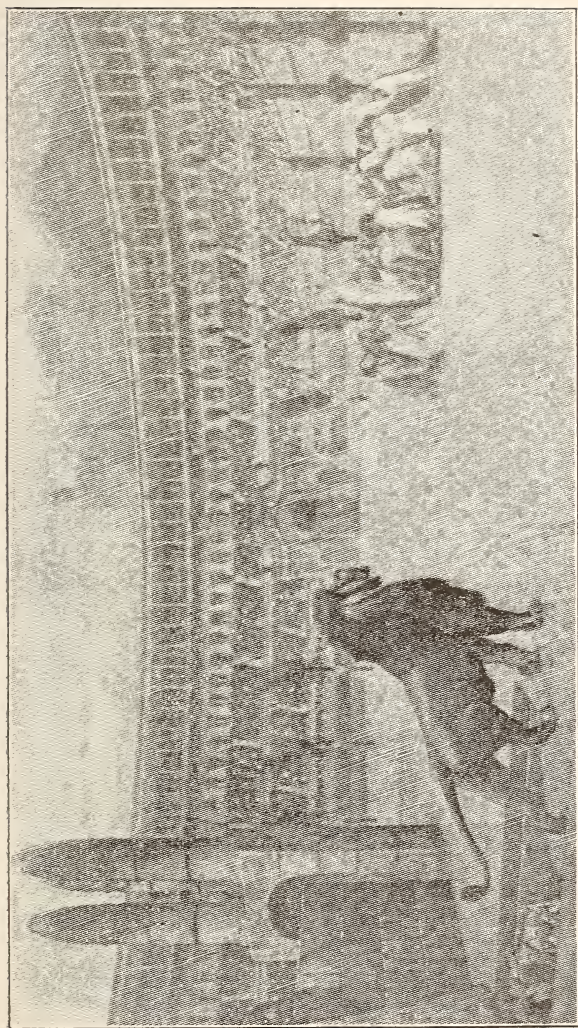


depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:35-39.)

What a life of devotion to truth is this of the apostle Paul, what a soldier of the cross is he! And what does he think of it all when he is about to close his work on earth? Does he think that he has wasted his days, and say that he is sorry that he has denied himself so much for Jesus' sake? In view of the eternity into which he is about to pass, does he say, "O, that I had spent my days seeking earthly glory and pleasure and riches!"? Listen now to the dying words of him who worked for Jesus as no other man has ever worked, as he thinks of his battles for the cross of Christ, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:6-8.)

As I stand here in this old theater, grand even in its ruins, my mind goes back to the martyrs who have died for the gospel in this city of Rome. Above them all stands the apostle Paul, because of his great labors. But besides him, thousands of others died in this city for the name of Jesus. Yea, upon the very sands of this theater have perished many of the disciples of Christ for their





Christians Dying in the Arena for the Name of Jesus

faith in him. The Roman empire did her best to destroy the kingdom of Jesus, and it seemed in those days of persecution as if she would accomplish her purpose; but this blood of the martyrs only became the seed of the Church. Where is Rome today, and where is the kingdom of Christ? That great empire is only in history, but the kingdom of God still goes on, conquering the nations of the earth. Though it is found in many places in a corrupted form, still in every nation under the sun there are to be found those who are willing to die for the name of Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords. And when the angel shall stand with one foot on the sea and the other on the land, and shall declare that time was, that time is, but that time shall be no more,—then, not simply one, but all the kingdoms of earth will pass away, but the kingdom of God will go on. “In the days of these kings,” said the old prophet, referring to the time of the Cæsars. “shall the God of heaven establish a kingdom which shall never be destroyed.” For two thousand years, this kingdom has withstood the arts of the Evil One, and is stronger today than it ever was. And if we are faithful citizens in this empire, faithful to Jesus our great King, we know that even when earthly things will have ceased to be, we shall continue as the happy subjects of the Prince of Peace, and shall be the immortalized citizens in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

## VIII

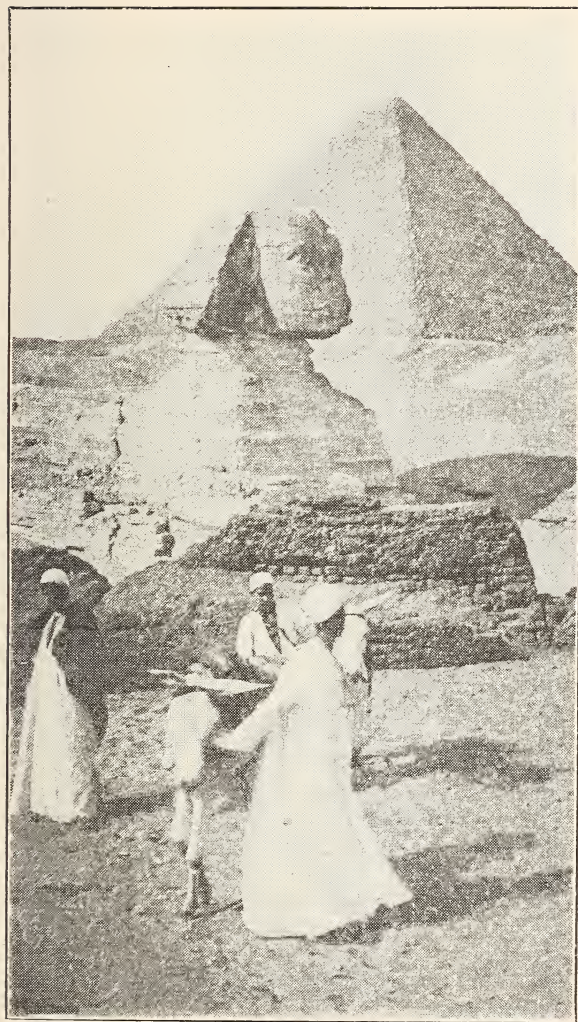
### THE LAND OF THE PHARAOHS

OUR GOOD SHIP brings us safely to Port Said, and immediately we make preparations to start for Cairo. We find, however, that the morning train has gone and that we cannot start for the metropolis of Egypt until late in the evening. We spend the interval along the shore of the Great Sea, watching the waves as they play about upon the beach, and thinking of the ancient country which we are about to see. We remember that this land without the River Nile would be uninhabited and would only be a continuation of the great Libyan desert. The Nile is, in fact, Egypt itself. This river is one of the longest in the world, taking its source in central Africa and flowing four thousand miles to the Mediterranean Sea. It seldom rains in Egypt, and the water used by man and beast and land is obtained by the inundation of the Nile. The heavy rains in central Africa cause the river to overflow, bringing with it many feet of sediment and making Egypt one of the most fertile spots in the world. In the valley of the Nile the arable

land nowhere exceeds ten miles in width, with the exception of the delta, and thus Egypt really presents the unique appearance of a country nearly a thousand miles in length and only ten or twelve miles in width. But in this narrow land have transpired some of the greatest events of human history, and have lived some of the most learned and ingenious men the world has ever seen. The skill and knowledge which built the pyramids far back beyond the dawn of history are the wonder of the world even today. In sight of these great piles of masonry was born the man Moses, who led the Jewish people up out of bondage in Egypt to the promised land, and became the leader of the greatest religious nation the world has ever known. Here, too, in this land of pyramids lived for a little time the child Jesus, whither his parents had taken him to escape the wrath of Herod. It is upon such great events as these that our minds dwell as we wait for the train to carry us down into this ancient land.

From Port Said we run directly south for an hour or more, parallel with the Suez Canal, one of the great achievements of the nineteenth century. I would enjoy much to go on south to the Red Sea and look for the place where the children of Israel may have crossed in their flight from Egypt, but time forbids, and we stay with our train, which carries us west and south to the city of Cairo. It is night, but the moon is shining brightly, giving one an idea of the country through



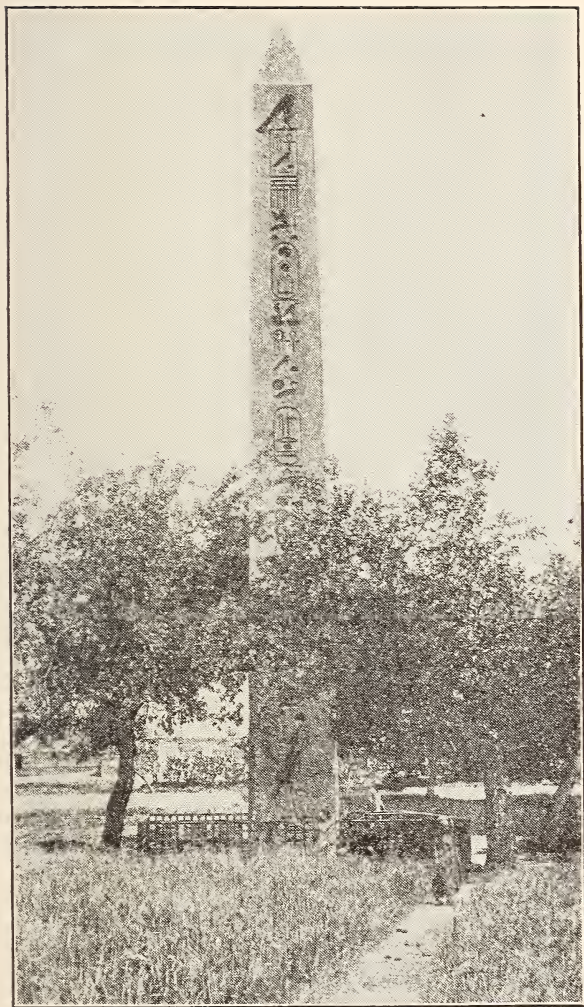


Pyramid and Sphinx of Giseh

which he is passing. My traveling companions are sleeping, but I cannot, for I am now passing over historic ground which I may never see again. My guide-book tells me that we are now traveling past the ruins of storehouses where grain was kept, which may be the cities of Pithom and Raamses, built by the enslaved Jews thirty-five centuries ago. I fancy I see them now as they toil under the heavy load; I see the taskmaster with his whip, and hear the groan of the bleeding slave. I hear, too, the cry of the bereaved mother as her darling babe is cast into the river. But their Egyptian bondage is now over, and I see them marching out of that land with great substance. I cannot sleep while passing over such historic ground as this.

Cairo is the city from which the tourist makes excursions to the historic ruins of Egypt. Here one takes the train to Heliopolis, the ancient city of the sun, called On by the Egyptians and Old Testament writers, where nothing is left of that famous city except a few piles of rubbish and a single obelisk. From here one makes the excursion to Memphis—called Noph by Bible writers—perhaps the most ancient city of Egypt, where nothing is to be seen today except a few large statues and the necropolis, or city of the dead. And from here one makes the interesting trip to Cheops, the largest of the pyramids. This huge pile is more than four hundred and eighty feet in height and covers thirteen acres at its base. Herodotus estimated that one hundred thousand men were





Sole Remains of the City "On" of the Bible

employed twenty years in the erection of this single structure. For forty centuries the pyramids have withstood the destructive hand of time, and no doubt will stand until time shall be no more. The top of the pyramids is a model place for musing when the moon is up or the sun is nearly down. One is there impressed with the shortness of his life compared with the countless generations gone before.

In no country of the world are there such magnificent ruins of ancient heathen temples as in the land of the Pharaohs. The banks of the Nile for eight hundred miles are dotted with these structures of religious devotion of the ancient Egyptians. Some of these buildings have been covered with dirt for centuries, and now almost perfect are seen by the modern traveler. The ruins of the temples at Thebes, however, are the most stupendous of all the ruins of Egypt and of the world. Thebes was a mighty city long before Jerusalem had been founded. Homer, the Greek poet who lived seven hundred years before Christ, spoke of "the hundred-gated Thebes." On the site of this city the ruins of the temple of Luxor are the marvel of the tourist, but those of the temples of Karnak surpass even this. In all the world there are no ruins so stupendous and magnificent as those of Karnak in the ancient city of Thebes. They are not a single temple, but a cluster of temples, forming a little city of sacred buildings. We spend the day wandering among the

walls and columns of these sacred buildings and viewing the curious hieroglyphics upon the stones. The guide-book, through the aid of the Rosetta Stone, is able to decipher some of these sacred writings and to tell us of the deeds of long-forgotten kings. On the north wall of the temple of Ammon "are historical reliefs of great importance, commemorating the victories of Sethos I and Rameses II over the inhabitants of Palestine." On another wall of this same temple is an account of the victory of Shishak over the Israelites, as recorded in 1 Kings 14:25, 26, and the features of the captives are clearly those of the Jew. "And it came to pass in the fifth year of King Rehoboam that Shishak, king of Egypt, came up against Jerusalem; and he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house. He even took away all; and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made." When I read this confirmation of God's Word upon the monuments of Egypt, I am strengthened in my faith.

The great hall of columns in this temple of Ammon is one of the wonders of the world even today. Its breadth is three hundred and thirty-eight feet and its depth one hundred and seventy feet. The roof is supported by one hundred and thirty-four columns. One hundred and twenty-two columns are each forty-two and one-half feet in height and six and one-half feet in diameter. The remaining twelve columns are each nearly

twelve feet in diameter and upward of thirty-three feet in circumference and seventy-eight feet in height. Six men with outstretched arms can hardly span one of these huge columns. With all the boasted knowledge and wisdom of the twentieth century, we cannot, after all, despise the skill and learning of the ancients.

The day of sight-seeing in the ruins of Thebes is about done, and as a climax to the whole we take our stand on a massive pylon, or gateway, of a temple, there to wait for the twilight to approach and the moon to rise and throw her pale solemn light over the historic place. We have eaten our evening lunch, and now while my companions are resting in sleep on the giant stones of the pylon, I am drinking in the scene. In the immediate foreground is the historic Nile, making her way majestically to the sea, and seeming to say to the land as she passes, "All that you are, you owe to me." Beyond the river is part of the valley in which once lay much of the famous Thebes, and in which are seen even today two great statues called the Colossi of Memnon. Still farther toward the west and in the hills on the border of the desert are to be found the rock-hewn sepulchers of Egypt's most famous kings, on the inside walls of which tombs are paintings as fresh and bright as if just from the hand of the artist, though they were painted thirty-five centuries ago. An absence of moisture in the Egyptian atmosphere is one reason why so many of her works of





The Great Hall of Columns at Karnak

art have come down to us in almost a perfect state. Turning my eyes from the west to the east, I see the impressive ruins of the temples of Thebes, among which I have been wandering most of the day. The sun in the west sinks lower and lower, the shadows of the massive columns grow darker and darker, and a solemn stillness settles over all the place. The day, so emblematic of the life of man, is about to close forever. Oh, how short the life of mortal man—yea, how short the life, even of a nation! Since first these gigantic stones were raised by ancient skill, nations have been born and died; thrones have been lifted up and crumbled to the ground; and men counted great in their generation have long been forgotten. What am I in this great ocean of time?

The nations and great characters of history come before me as I muse. I see the great struggle for glory among men. Assyria, with Nineveh as its capital, becomes a world-power, and directs the affairs of the nations. Then comes Babylon, that great and mighty city so often mentioned in Holy Writ. I see Belshazzar feasting with a thousand of his lords when the hand writes upon the wall the doom of his mighty kingdom. Cyrus, the Persian, now leads in the affairs of the nations, and Cambyses, a successor on the Persian throne, leads his armies up the Nile, even to Thebes. I see now the Macedonian phalanx under Alexander the Great pushing boldly into the east and shattering the mighty Persian kingdom. But this



short-lived empire is itself soon broken and scattered to the four winds of heaven. Then Rome, that mightiest of all powers, so fitly called the iron kingdom, reaches out its strong arms and grasps the inhabitable earth. But the history of the past speaks of Rome as it speaks of all the ancient empires, and tells us of the decline and fall of that great kingdom. And from the chaos of this shattered empire have sprung, after many conflicts and changes, the modern countries of Europe. All these events and a thousand more of equal importance have transpired since first these stones were placed in the great temples of Thebes. All the nations and individuals of ages past have had their plans and hopes, but all these are now lying low; and still the wheel of time goes on. I now am in the activities of life, but must soon lie down even as have they. I may have my hopes and joys, my ambitions and high aims even as they, but these must soon cease forever. Soon my little course will have been run, soon my little day will have been finished, and I shall have gone the way of the countless millions of the ages past. My nearest friends may come and drop a few tears upon my grave, but soon they themselves will follow me. The world will not stop when I lie down in the sleep of death, but the busy whirl of life will go on. Yet the grave is the goal for all.

The gay will laugh

When thou are gone, the solemn brood of care

Plod on, and each one as before will chase

His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave  
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come  
And make their bed with thee.

My life is short, oh, so short! My days so few  
on earth! How, then, shall I use my time? Shall  
I spend my days in following the pleasures of life  
which will waste the body and destroy the soul?  
Shall I use my time in laying up treasures which  
I cannot take with me when I leave this world?  
Shall I spend my life in seeking glory from mortal  
man? Far be this from an eternity-bound crea-  
ture. I must use my life in laying up treasure  
in heaven, where moth and rust cannot consume.  
I must seek the fullness of joy at God's right  
hand, where there are pleasures for evermore. I  
must strive that I may have a friend who will  
stand at my side when all other friends will fail.  
Oh, the brightness of that man's way, who has  
Christ as the shepherd of his soul! Though he  
walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
he will fear no evil, for His rod and staff they  
comfort him. Across the Nile the sun is setting,  
kissing the world a sad good-night, and I sing softly  
to myself my favorite hymn:

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide,  
The darkness deepens, Lord, with me abide;  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me.

I look down upon the ruins of these ancient  
temples and think of the many centuries which  
have intervened since these great stones were

reared. I think of the many generations which have come and gone, and realize that in a few days I must depart from the scenes of human life.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day,  
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;  
Change and decay in all around I see,  
Oh, Thou who changest not, abide with me.

Father in heaven, help me to see my littleness in thy sight. Help me ever to remember the shortness of my days on earth; help me to prepare for the eternity beyond. Help me, O God, to put away all selfish and earthly aims, and live for the advancement of truth and righteousness in the earth. Help me to become more like Jesus, thine only Son, and my beloved Savior. Help me to build my hopes on the Rock of Ages, the same yesterday, today and forever. Help me ever to remember that Christ died for me that I should not henceforth live unto myself, but unto Him who died for me and rose again.

## IX

### PALESTINE IN GENERAL

**B**EFORE we enter upon a description of the particular places in Palestine, it is well that we take a general view of the land. Because nearly all the events of the Bible have transpired in Palestine, perhaps we have the idea that this is a large country. It is, however, only a small one, being 139 miles long and from 30 to 50 miles wide, and is about one-sixth larger than the state of Connecticut. And yet in this little strip of land have happened the greatest events which have transpired among the children of men.

Palestine has only two seasons,—a dry, hot summer, and a rainy but comparatively warm winter. From the beginning of May to the end of October, the sky is almost uninterruptedly cloudless, and is seldom broken by rain. Although dews fall at night, sometimes very heavy, still all vegetation is burnt up because of the lack of moisture; and many of the springs dry up. Towards the end of October, the rainy season is sometimes ushered in with thunderstorms called in the Scriptures the “first” or “former” rains. (Deut. 11:14; Joel

2:23; James 5:7). These rains soften the parched ground so that the farmer can plough. In November there is generally fine weather, and in December the heavy rains commence and end about the close of February. The "latter" rains fall in March and April and promote the growth of the crops.

Although there are many hills in Palestine and these are covered with stones, still in many of the valleys the soil is fertile and good crops are grown. Galilee was regarded as Palestine's most fertile district in antiquity. Its annual production was greater than at present, partly because the land was better irrigated and partly because many regions now barren were cultivated. The plain of Sharon is productive now as it was in Bible times. Wheat is the chief product of these plains, from which the common people make large flat cakes in their antique ovens. These cakes are flexible and can be easily rolled up and put in one's pocket; and I have no doubt that as they are made of the whole wheat they contain more nourishment than the white bread we eat in America. The vine which was cultivated so much in antiquity, almost died out under the rule of the Arabs, but is now being revived. The olive is still a staple tree in Palestine, and the fig tree is still bearing its fruit for the people. The carob tree is tolerably common and furnishes food for the poorer classes, the pods of which are supposed to be the husks which the prodigal ate. (Luke 15:16.)

The dwellings of the country people are usually of clay. In the plains they build with clay bricks and in the hills with stone. The houses generally contain one or two rooms on a level with the ground; fire places and chimneys are unknown. The ceilings are of wood-work covered with twigs and clay. There are no frame houses in Palestine, for wood is not sufficiently plentiful for such structures. The stone houses are flat on top with the exception of domes which many of them have, and parapets, or little walls, which run around the edge of the roof. When one goes to the top of one of these houses, he thinks of the vision which Peter had at Joppa in just such a place. No doubt many things in Palestine today present much the same appearance that they did in Christ's time, even if desolation and barrenness now reign in many places where once was fertility and life.

Palestine has passed through many changes since the days of our Savior. In the year 70 A. D., the city of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans for the rebellion it raised against them, and the Jews who were not slain were dispersed among the nations of the earth. In the seventh century the land fell into the hands of the Mohammedans in their religious political war. For several centuries these "infidels" had complete control of the "sacred places," and the hardships incurred by "Christian" pilgrims in their visits to the holy places, stirred Christian Europe to wrest the Holy Land from the hands of the Mo-



hammedans. Through the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Palestine was a battle ground, sometimes being in the hands of the Moslems and sometimes in the hands of the Christians. Finally a barbarous people, now called the Turks, came down from the north, overran the land, adopted the religion of the Arabs, and are still in possession of Palestine. The Turkish government is one of the greatest despotisms of the earth, though there seem to be signs for a change for the better in these latter days. The Sultan of Turkey oppresses the people to enrich himself personally, and he gives the people little or nothing in return for their taxes. This empire is loosely thrown together and must soon go to pieces. No doubt it long ago would have been dissolved, had it not been for the jealousy of the European powers, each of which fears that the other will get a bigger slice than itself. The time has come in the history of the world for despotic governments to be changed or entirely overthrown. I have no kind feelings for a government which has such an arbitrary censorship of the press that they will take from a traveler, as they took from me at Smyrna, such a harmless work as Bædeker's Guide-Book on Palestine and Syria. The sooner such an empire is dissolved, the better it will be for humanity.

## MT. CARMEL

THE MODERN TOWN of Haifa, which lies at the foot of Mt. Carmel, is the first point in Palestine proper to which the traveler comes as he makes his way south by sea to the land of our Lord. Mt. Carmel is really a chain of mountains extending southeast from the point where it touches the sea. The highest point of the mountains is about 1,800 feet above the sea, and it slopes down to a promontory to the water's edge, where the Carmelite monastery is situated, 480 feet above the sea. The dews from the ocean keep the vegetation green even in the long dry summer, and thus it is a pleasing exception to the dryness which prevails in Palestine at that season. In describing in prophetic words the beauty of the Church, Isaiah (35:1, 2) alludes to the pleasantness in Carmel in these words, "The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of Jehovah, the excellency of our

God." This mountain seems to have been sacred to the Jews, for they had an altar of the Lord there, (1 Kings 18:19, 30); and old Elijah, the prophet of Jehovah, often resorted to it in the days of his troubles, (2 Kings 2:25; 4:25). It was at this mountain that Elijah had his experience with the prophets of Baal.

The day was hot when we took our umbrellas and started for a long jaunt up the mountain to behold the sights and meditate on the events of ages past. The view of the sea from the top fully repays for the toil. At the height of a thousand feet, one obtains a grand picture of the Great, or Mediterranean, Sea, which has played such an important part in the history of the ancient nations. Weary with the climb, we sit down to rest and to drink in the scenery and to meditate upon events of sacred history. Under the shade of our umbrellas, we read of Elijah and the troublous times through which he went; and it all seems so real.

The children of Israel have wandered far from the commandments which the Lord had given them and are now following the imaginations of their own hearts. Though he had told them plainly that they must not make any graven images to bow down to them, still we see them now worshipping Baal almost universally. King Ahab and his wicked wife are responsible for much of this apostasy in Israel. They have killed all the prophets of the Lord they can find, and are feeding the prophets of Baal at their own table. Elijah, it seems, is about

the only true prophet left, and in his loneliness he cries to God, "The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away." (1 Kings 19:10.) But God comforts the old prophet by saying that there are "seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal." (1 Kings 19:18.)

What a blow this bit of history is to those religious people who are determined to follow the crowd, and what a source of comfort to those who walk in the right way, though they are far in the minority! Many today who are loud in their pretensions to loyalty to Christ are following a religion as different from the teachings of Jesus as that of the worshipers of Baal was different from the Jewish law. These people despise those who are contending for the simplicity that is in Christ, and had they lived in Elijah's day they would have despised him, too. No doubt many who are contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, feel sometimes that they are alone as Elijah did. How sad to see so few who will contend for the right, no matter what it may bring to them! But God has reserved many thousands who have not yet corrupted His Word, and who will continue thus until they die. It is not numbers that counts with God at all, but it is faithfulness to his Word. Help us, O Father, to be faithful to Thee, though we may be hounded as was Elijah of old!

As we continue to read the Sacred Volume, we come to the meeting between Ahab and Elijah. When the King sees him, he cries, "Is it thou, thou troubler of Israel?" But the old prophet answered, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of Jehovah, and thou hast followed the Baalim." What human nature is displayed in this angry question of Ahab! He had sold himself to do evil, and every one who tried to stay his downward course was a disturber among the people. Do we not see the same thing manifested today? Let an Elijah oppose the corruptions of religious people about him, and they will call him a mover of sedition, a pestilent fellow and a disturber of Israel. But it is not he who contends for the simple teachings of Jesus and opposes all departures therefrom, who is a disturber in Israel and a mover of sedition; but it is he who has left the Word of God and is following the vanity of his own heart.

The trial which Elijah here made between his God and Baal was a memorable one. The prophet proposes to the people that he put a bullock on an altar and cry unto his God, and that the prophets of Baal put a bullock on an altar and they cry unto their god; and that the god who answers by fire is the one they should serve. The people cheerfully consent unto the trial. The prophets of Baal dance about their altar from morn till noon, and from noon till eve; they cut themselves with their knives and lances till the blood gushes out; but there is no

voice. In the midst of it all, Elijah mocks them, saying, "Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is musing, or is gone aside, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked." Later on, Elijah calls the people together and repairs the altar of the Lord which had been thrown down; and at the time of the evening sacrifice, offers a simple prayer to God over the bullock which had been prepared. No sooner has he ceased than fire comes from God and destroys the sacrifice. When the people see it, it seems to dawn on their minds what they have been doing, and in their repentance they cry, "Jehovah he is God; Jehovah he is God." Elijah then takes the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal to the brook Kishon, near the foot of Mt. Carmel, and there slays them. Thus did Elijah rid the people of the real disturbers of Israel.



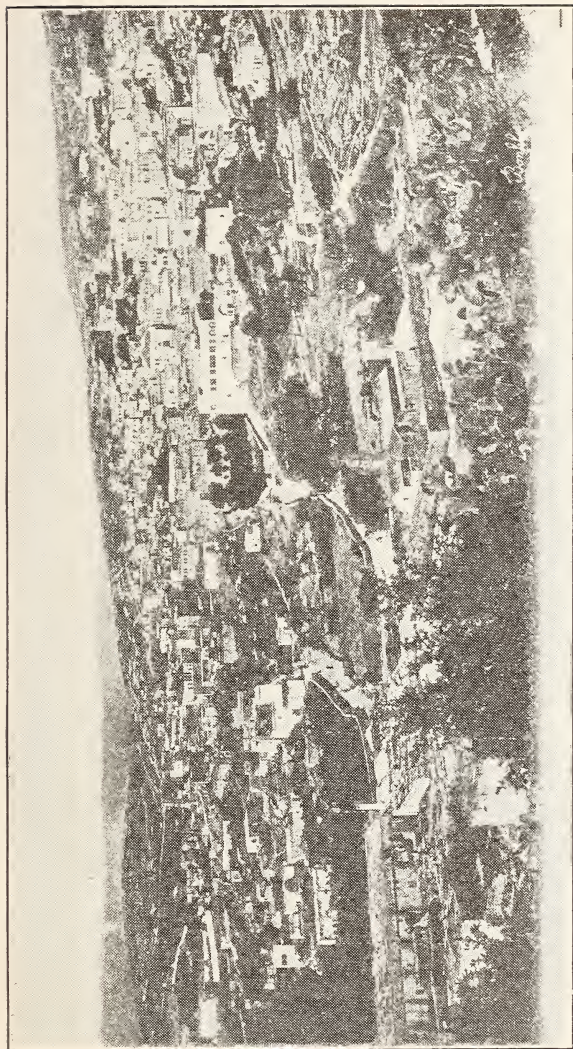
## XI

### NAZARETH

**I**T IS at the city of Haifa, near the foot of Mt. Carmel, that we make arrangements for our trip on horseback into the interior of Palestine. We can not go by rail, as there are only two railroads in the land—one running from Joppa to Jerusalem, and the other from Haifa to Damascus by the way of the Sea of Galilee. We can not go even by carriage to many of the most prominent places in this oppressed land, for there are few carriage roads here. Travelers must saddle horses and take to the bridle paths, if they would see most of the places so famed in sacred history. There are only two of us in our little company, and after making a contract with a dragoman, or guide, and a muleteer to care for the horses, the four of us start for Nazareth, twenty-three miles away. As we travel along, we obtain a fine view of the hills of Galilee, and we remember that many Bible characters whom we love have traveled over these very hills. The apostles and prophets and inspired scribes have looked upon these same hills upon which we are gazing today; yea, the Son of God

himself spent part of his sinless life in these very regions through which we are passing now. Through the whole day we enjoy these scenes and the pleasant thoughts they bring to our minds, and towards evening we wind our way into the city of Nazareth.

This city was unknown in Old Testament times and seems to have been an insignificant place in the days of Christ, for some seemed to think that nothing great or good could come out of Nazareth. (1 John 1:46.) The city has passed through many changes since the time of Jesus, sometimes dwindling away almost to nothing; and at other times increasing to a prosperous little city, chiefly perhaps through the influx of pilgrims. Today the city has a mixed population of about 11,000, consisting of Greek Catholics of two kinds, Roman Catholics, Mohammedans, Maronites, and Protestants, each religious community clustering together in a particular part of the place. Most of the inhabitants are engaged in farming and gardening, and some of them in handicrafts, and in the cotton and grain trade. "The district," says Bædeker, "is comparatively rich and the Christian farmers have retained many peculiarities of costume which are best observed at weddings. On festivals the women wear gay, embroidered jackets, and have their foreheads and breasts laden with coins, while the riding camel which forms an indispensable feature in such a procession is smartly caparisoned with shawls and strings of coins." While passing through Palestine, the intelligent student gives little credence



Nazareth, Where Jesus Spent His Boyhood Days

to the monkish tales with which he meets. The Roman Catholics have built a church over the place where they say the house of Mary once stood, and where, they say, Mary received the announcement that she should have a son. Romish tradition says that at one time when the Muslims were about to take Nazareth, angels picked the house up and carried it off to save it from desecration; and the house can now be seen in Italy! The church is called the Church of the Annunciation, and the Greek Catholics also have in another part of the town a Church of the Annunciation where they say Gabriel appeared to Mary. From these duplicate places, many of which we find in Palestine, we see that no confidence can be placed in the localization of all the little points in biblical history. Hills, cities, streams, lakes, mountains, etc., can be identified with considerable accuracy; but not so spots which have no means of identification. They exhibit here the workshop of Joseph, where he worked at the carpenter's trade, and where the boy Jesus helped him. Of course we know that this is not the same house in which they worked, nor probably the same spot, but we do know that it was in just such a place as this that both Joseph and Jesus spent many days working at the carpenter's trade. Jesus, our great High Priest and Mediator, knows how to sympathize with us in our daily toil. What a consolation it should be to those of us who have to work hard for our daily bread to know that Christ has done the same! Our hearts should be made lighter for

the duties of life, and our love should be made stronger toward Him who has done these things for an example to us.

As we wander about this place, we think of how the child Jesus spent his boyhood and early manhood here. After the little affair at Jerusalem with the learned men when he was twelve years of age, he returned with his parents to Nazareth and was subject to them. What a noble example Jesus becomes for the entire human race! Not only is he such for grown men and women, but for children as well. Obedience to proper authority is the only safeguard to society. God intended that the older and more experienced in life should guide the younger. He has ordained that parents should teach their children what is right, and that the children should obey their parents. The citizens of a nation are to a great extent obedient to the laws of their country in the proportion that the children are obedient to their parents. Destroy the parental authority, and the nation is doomed. Under the Old Testament, God ordained that children should obey their parents; and now Jesus who is the exemplar for all nations of the world, sets the example in his childhood. My dear young friend, if you want to please your Savior, you must follow his example and be obedient to your parents in the Lord. It is true that parents sometimes wish their children to do that which is wrong; but if you have come to that age when you know that certain things they require of you



are wrong, then you are to "obey God rather than man." But in all the other things of life, you must follow the example of Jesus and be subject to your parents. No matter how good you may be in other respects, if you will not obey your father and mother you will not be accepted by your Savior.

The most important thing of interest in Nazareth is an ancient spring of water. The water is brought by a conduit a little ways to a point called Mary's Well, where women are to be seen constantly drawing water in pitchers. It is interesting to stand here and see the women and girls coming and going with their tall earthen pitchers on their heads. No doubt this is the way they carried their water three thousand years ago. We do not see the men at any time help in this work of carrying water. In this Oriental country where the pure religion of Christ is almost unknown and where Mohammedanism is the chief belief, we behold the degradation of woman. The followers of Mahomet look upon women as an inferior order of beings and generally dislike to see them praying or occupying themselves with religion. Sometimes a man can be seen riding the horse or donkey, and his wife walking in front or behind. In Christian countries, it is just the other way,—the man walks and lets the woman ride. What has made the difference? Our only answer can be that it is the religion of Jesus. God never intended for woman to be a mere slave to man. In the beginning he made one man and



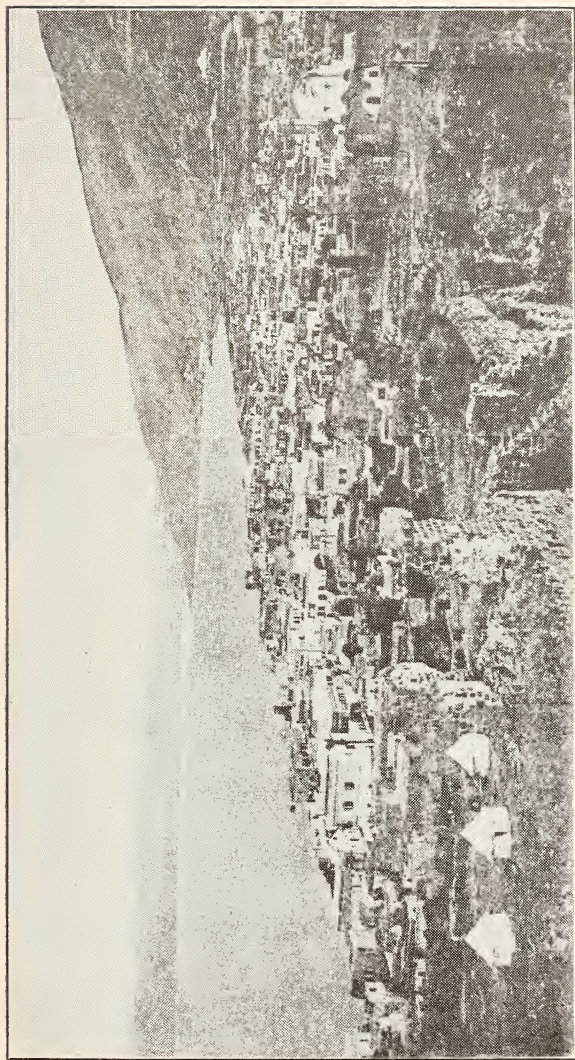
one woman, and intended that man with his coarser nature should go out into the hard world, and with his broader experience should guide the family; and that woman with her finer nature should stand at his side as a helpmate to encourage and help him in the battle for bread and in the guidance of the little ones. It is true the Jews departed from the original pattern, but the true relation between husband and wife has been reasserted by Christ, and through his religion has blessed the world. When we compare Christian with heathen and Mohammedan countries, we must conclude that Jesus is the one who has raised woman from a mere slave of man to a helpmate; and if any class of people should appreciate the religion of Christ more than another, it certainly is womankind.

But as we stand here by the spring in Nazareth, watching the women and girls coming and going with their pitchers, and the men and boys coming to slake their thirst, and remember that this is the only spring in the city, and that it has been here for hundreds of years, we know that the boy Jesus came here many times to quench his thirst just as they are doing now. How real it all seems!

CANA OF GALILEE, TIBERIAS,  
AND THE SEA OF  
GALILEE

FROM NAZARETH we travel northeast about six hours' journey to the Sea of Galilee. On the route we pass a village of about 600 inhabitants, which is supposed to be the Cana of Galilee, where Jesus turned the water into wine. (John 2:1-11.) A Romish chapel is built over the spot where they say the miracle was performed. In the Greek Church is shown an earthen-ware jar which is said to have been used on the occasion of the miracle, and while we do not believe the tradition, we recognize that just such jars were used in those days.

The Sea of Galilee is a beautiful sight to behold from the hills which surround it. The traveler coming from the west does not see it until it suddenly breaks into view causing him unconsciously to utter a word of surprise and pleasure. On the east of the sea are the hills of Gennesaret, and on the west are the hills of Galilee on which we are



The City of Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee

now standing, with an opening between them on the north for the Jordan River to flow into the lake, and an opening on the south for the river to flow out of the lake in its meandering course toward the Dead Sea; among which hills this famous sea nestles like a child resting in its mother's bosom. This body of water is thirteen miles long, and six miles broad at its widest point. It is 681 feet below the Mediterranean Sea, and is from 130 to 150 feet deep, the depth varying with the season. In the early spring the vegetation is beautifully green, and because of the low situation of the lake, a sub-tropical vegetation is produced, only, however, for a short time. The border of this lake was once lined with many and prosperous people, and its surface was dotted with many active little ships; but now there can be found outside of Tiberias only a few villages and only three or four miserable little boats.

From our beautiful point of view, we descend the hill to Tiberias, the chief city of the Jordan Valley. According to Josephus, the building of this city was finished about 22 A. D., and although it was a prominent place in the days of Christ's ministry and the days of the apostles, little is said about it in the New Testament, because, perhaps, our Savior and His ambassadors seldom or never visited the place as there were few Jews there. After the destruction of Jerusalem, however, Tiberias became the headquarters for the Jews in those parts, and here have lived

the greatest of the Hebrew rabbis, and from this place has come the best literature of the Jews outside of the Bible. Tiberias now has a population of about 4,000 inhabitants. At our hotel we eat fish for supper, and we remember how Peter and Andrew spent many days gathering this food in their nets.

Of course we must take a ride over this famous sea, and after making arrangements we sail away. As we look back at the departing shore, we remember how Christ once pushed a boat out from the beach a little ways and taught the multitudes which were crowding to hear him. Over on the east are the hills of Gennesaret where the swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea. As we look about us, surrounded as we are with hills, we see that we are in a great basin, down into which, we are told, storms often come suddenly. Because of the suddenness of some of these storms, many lives have been lost in the lake, lying now so peacefully before us. We in America say that a storm came up; but on the Sea of Galilee they say that a storm came *down* upon them. To the sailors upon this little sea, a storm has gathered beyond the hills before they know it, in many instances not giving them time to get to the shore, and it swoops *down* upon them like an eagle after its prey. The destructive higher critics try to make us believe that the New Testament books were written many years after the time to which they are ascribed and in a different land, but the



harmony of the incidental geographical details of the Bible to the facts in the case, show us that these men knew whereof they spake.

It was on this little sea troubled with a great storm that Jesus walked at one time, and it was here that he then showed his power over the elements of heaven. He was crossing the waters when a storm arose while he was in the hold of the ship asleep. His disciples being afraid awoke him saying, "Save, Lord, we perish." But he answered them, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. Thus did Jesus manifest his power to those who have written these things for us.

As these memories from sacred history pass through our minds while we are sailing over these waves, we quietly hum to ourselves the familiar song:

Jesus, Savior, pilot me  
Over life's tempestuous sea;  
Unknown waves before me roll,  
Hiding rock and treacherous shoal;  
Chart and compass came from thee;  
Jesus, Savior, pilot me.

As a mother stills her child,  
Thou canst hush the ocean wild;  
Boisterous waves obey thy will  
When thou sayst to them, "Be still!"  
Wondrous Sovereign of the sea;  
Jesus, Savior, pilot me.



When at last I near the shore,  
And the fearful breakers roar  
'Twixt me and the peaceful rest;  
Then, while leaning on thy breast  
May I hear thee say to me,  
"Fear not, I will pilot thee."

### XIII

## BETHSAIDA, CHORAZIN AND CAPERNAUM

OUR LITTLE BOAT sails on till we reach the northern boundary of the sea, where we find the ruins of ancient, populous cities. It is certain that these piles of stone mark the sites of Chorazin and Capernaum. The city of Bethsaida was situated a few miles away and two or three miles back from the sea. These cities were lively places in the days of Christ and were often visited by him. Wherever Jesus went, he showed by the miracles he performed that he was a messenger from God. In these cities he manifested his power, and actually performed "most of his mighty works here." And yet these people were so set in wrong doing that they would not repent of their evil ways. I fancy now I see the Savior walking among the people of these cities, teaching His wonderful doctrines and commanding the people to repent. Instead of being convinced by His miracles and of listening to the great Teacher, they deliberately turn away and follow the imaginations of their own

hearts. From their deliberate rejection of Jesus, we see that our Savior has passed through the same discouragements which every gospel preacher, and in fact every active Christian, is compelled to pass through. As in many places people in the latter times turn from the truth, so did they in Jesus' day. In the same way that many stop their ears today, so did they in the days of our Lord. The gospel of Jesus was not popular when it was first given, and it is not popular in the twentieth century. When Jesus saw that He could do these people no good, He turned away in His sadness and pronounced a woe upon them. As we sail away from these ruins, I look back upon the stones of the cities, scattered along the shore, and fancy that Christ sailed away just as I am, and that He gazed back on the disobedient cities, whose ruins now lie before me, and said, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted unto heaven? thou shalt go down unto Hades; for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in thee, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto thee that it shall be more tolerable for the land of

Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.”  
(Matt. 12:21-24, R. V.)

What an awful lesson these sad events convey to us! Disobedience to the law of God will never go unpunished, especially when we have such chances to know the truth as these cities. Jesus here brings to our minds the thought of man's responsibility. The greater our opportunities of knowing and obeying the truth, the greater our accountability to Him. We sometimes think of the heathen who have never heard of the one true God and are still worshipping idols, and we express our pity for them; and yet, dear reader, do you know that there is a better prospect for those earnest, honest people who are doing the best they know how, than for you and me who have so much knowledge and yet are lukewarm in living up to it? This certainly is true if, as Christ says, it will be better for Sodom at the judgment than for Capernaum. We condemn the ignorant heathen for their idolatry, and yet there are many today who profess to be Christians who are just as much idolaters as those who bow to an image of wood or stone. Paul says that “covetousness is idolatry,” and that “no idolater hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God and Christ.” How sad to know that many Christians think that they will be saved, when the truth is that they will be lost for their covetousness! Are you one of them, dear reader?

And you, dear friend, who have never obeyed the gospel, what is your prospect for the future? You believe the Bible and know you should obey it, and yet you have made no effort to do so. Over and over again you have heard the invitation, and each time you have turned a deaf ear. Your Christian friends have tried to interest you in your own eternal welfare, but you have turned them away and treated them as meddlers. You have shunned those who you think will talk to you on religious matters, and you have stayed away from the house of God lest your conscience be quickened to your duty. The thought of death you have tried to banish from your mind by losing yourself in business or pleasure. You can not be happy in your rebellion to God, for you cannot get rid of the thought that you are unprepared to die. You look down upon the cold and silent form of a brother, a sister, a father, a mother, your wife, or perhaps your own dear child. Your mind goes back over your own sinful life, and you say to yourself, Oh, what if that were I, for I am not prepared to die? Then you turn away from the mound where the form of your loved one is laid and you push from your mind the thought of death and the hereafter. Again you lose yourself in the busy whirl of life, and try to forget your sorrows in the fleeting joys of the passing day. Thus for many years do you push forward the evil day, and continue to rebel against God. Some time, however, you will not be able

to banish these things from your mind, for it will be *you*, not your friend or relative, who is lying upon the bed for the last time. You have spent your life seeking the pleasure or honor or riches which this world can give, and now you must give them all up. You have lived for yourself and not for others. You leave your thousands behind where moth and rust corrupt, and you have not one cent ahead. As your eye grows dim and you see the world with its riches and pleasure and glory slipping away from you, you realize, when it is too late, that "all is vanity and a striving after wind." Two things you can not escape,—death and the judgment; for God says, "It is appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment." For Tyre and Sidon, and Sodom and Gomorrha, there may be some excuse; but for Chorazin and Capernaum, and for you, my friend, there is no excuse, for you have fully heard the word of warning. Turn, then, oh turn, for why will you die?



#### XIV

### MT. TABOR, NAIN, ENDOR, SHUNEM, JEZREEL, MT. GILBOA, AND SAMARIA

FROM TIBERIAS we go back to Nazareth by a route different from the one we came there in order that we may visit Mt. Tabor. This mountain rises about two thousand feet above the sea, and the top is a plateau of about four square miles. This is the place to which Deborah directed Barak to assemble his army. (Judges 4.) In Psalm 89:12, Tabor and Hermon are extolled together, "The north and the south, thou hast created them; Tabor and Hermon rejoice in thy name." From an early time, Tabor has been regarded as the mount of transfiguration, yet there is no positive testimony to that effect. The Roman and Greek Catholics have each a monastery here, the former having three chapels in theirs to commemorate the three tabernacles which Peter proposed to build for Moses, Elijah and Christ. The record says that Peter didn't know what he was talking about. In other words, he was confused and thought he

had to say something. When a religious body will try to carry out the words of a man even when inspiration says that he didn't know what he was talking about, it has reached the limit of blindness. If these had studied the inspired writings of Peter as they should, they would not have apostatized from the truth as they have.

The view from this mountain is one never to be forgotten. Far away to the north rises the majestic Hermon, while nearer than it are the hills of Galilee. To the east the north end of the Sea of Galilee can be seen and the mountains beyond it. To the south is the plain of Esdrælon, stretching out before us for many miles, in which raged the battle of Barak and Sisera. To the west rises Mt. Carmel, running up to the edge of the Great Sea. No doubt Jesus stood upon this mountain gazing over the works of his Father, just as we are doing today. On this mountain and around it, many battles were ostensibly fought in Christ's name in the days of the Crusades, and yet they were not fought by His authority, for He says: "They that take the sword, shall perish with the sword."

From Nazareth we start the next day on our direct trip south to Jerusalem. We descend into the great and fertile plain of Esdrælon, and make our way toward the south. In this plain, we cross the great caravan route from Egypt to Damascus, over which the camels have been carrying the grain of Egypt and the wares of Damascus

for thousands of years. We look ahead and actually see a train of about twenty-five camels winding their way to Damascus with their burden of wheat. It was to merchantmen on this very road that Joseph was sold, four thousand years ago. To the east of us lies Mt. Tabor which yesterday we ascended and from which we had such a fine view of the north of Palestine. South of it is a mountain called Little Hermon, eighteen hundred feet high, which is not known in the Bible by that name. And still further south is Mt. Gilboa, twelve hundred feet high, mentioned several times in the Old Testament. On the northern border of Little Hermon, are the two miserable villages of Nain and Endor. The former was the place where Christ raised the widow's son (Luke 7:11-15); and the latter, the place where Saul consulted the woman of the familiar spirit on the eve of the disastrous battle of Gilboa (1 Sam. 28:7-20). Farther south is the village of Shunem, where the Shunammite woman lived, whose son Elisha restored to life. (2 Kings 4, 8.) As we pass through Mohammedan villages, we notice that many children run after us and make a great noise. We notice that they are more noisy in this village of Shunem than in any through which we have yet passed. We ask the dragoman what they are crying, and he answers that they are saying, "Cursed be your father, cursed be your mother, cursed be ye; ye are Christians." Of course we pay no attention to the Mohammedan zeal which

has been put into the heads of the little ones.

Our journey soon brings us to the foot of Mt. Gilboa to a miserable little village which now stands on the ancient Jezreel. Near this point the battle was fought between Saul and the Philistines. (1 Sam. 31.) The Israelites were posted around Jezreel, and the Philistines were encamped at Shunem. Saul fell here, hence David in his dirge says, "Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew; neither let there be rain upon you." (1 Sam. 1:21.) Jezreel was afterwards the residence of Ahab and Jezebel, (1 Kings 18:45, 46): and near to it was the vineyard of Naboth. (1 Kings 21). Finally, our day's trip from Nazareth brings us to a place called Jenin, at the southern end of the great plain through which we have been traveling, and here we stay for the night.

On the morrow we rise for our journey to Nablous, ancient Shechem. On our way we pass Samaria, the ancient capital of the kingdom of Israel. When the palace of Omri, king of Israel, at Tirzah, burned down, he purchased a hill from Shemer and erected upon it a new residence called Shomeron, or Samaria. (1 Kings 16:24.) The town continued to be the capital of the northern kingdom until it was captured by Shalmaneser, 722 B. C., after a siege of three years. (2 Kings 17.) Samaria was a prominent place in the days of the apostles, and it was to this place that Philip went to preach the gospel. (Acts 8.) Samaria

was built upon a hill, the top of which is fifteen hundred feet above the sea, but the high altitude of the surrounding country makes the hill seem only a few hundred feet high. There are many ruins on this hill, telling of the former greatness of this city. She is now indeed Ichabod, for her glory has departed. Finally, we pass between the two mountains, Ebel and Gerizim, and stop in the ancient Shechem.

## SHECHEM, MT. EBEL, MT. GERIZIM AND JACOB'S WELL.

THE MODERN CITY of Nabulus is the ancient city of Sichem, or Shechem. It was the scene of the episode of Abimelech. (Judges 9.) Under Rehoboam the national assembly was held here, (1 Kings 12), which resulted in the final separation of the northern tribes from the southern. Jeroboam chose Shechem for his residence. The place now has about 24,000 inhabitants, and is beautifully located between the two mountains of Ebel and Gerizim. Twenty-two springs furnish water for the people, about half of which are perennial. The environs of the city are very fertile. Immediately on the north of Shechem rises Mt. Ebel to a height of 3,077 feet above the sea, and 1,207 feet above the city; and immediately on the south is Mt. Gerizim, 2,848 feet above the sea, and about 1,000 feet above the city. It was between these mountains that Joshua read the blessings and curses to the people after they had crossed the Jordan into the promised land.



Mt. Gerizim is noted especially to Bible students because it was the sacred mountain of the Samaritans. The religion of the Samaritans, you know, was a mixture of Judaism and heathenism, and the circumstances of its origin are familiar to Old Testament students. When the northern kingdom, called the kingdom of Israel, became so wicked that the cup of their iniquity was full, God sent Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria, against them. This king took Samaria, 722 B. C., and carried the ten tribes away into captivity. The same king brought other nations from his great kingdom, and put them in the land whence the ten tribes had been taken. When the Lord sent wild beasts down upon them, they said that it was because they did not worship the god of the former inhabitants of the land. The king then told them to bring back one of the priests who had been carried away into captivity, to teach them how to worship the God of Israel. The priest taught them the worship of God according to the law of Moses; but the people mixed with it the worship of their own deities, so that it could be said that "they feared Jehovah and served their own gods." When the kingdom of Judah, the southern kingdom of the Jews, had come back from their seventy years of Babylonish captivity to build again Jerusalem and their temple, the Samaritans proposed to help the Jews saying that they sought their God the same as the Jews themselves. When the Israelites refused to have anything to do with them, the Samaritans

founded a holy city and sanctuary of their own. Mt. Gerizim became their holy mountain where they built a temple, and as Shechem, their holy city, grew in importance, the city of Samaria declined. The worship of the Samaritans seemed to have become purer in its form, and that which they established at Mt. Gerizim became a rival religion with that at Jerusalem. Enmity has existed between the two peoples ever since the rebuilding of Jerusalem about 500 B. C.

The Samaritans have passed through many changes, and a few of them have come down to the present day. Their religion is very much like that of the Jews, for they have the pentateuch for their sacred book. "They are strict monotheists," says Bædeker, "and abhor all images and all expressions whereby human attributes are ascribed to God. They believe in good and evil spirits, and in the resurrection and last judgment. They expect the Messiah to appear 6,000 years after the creation of the world, but they do not consider that he will be greater than Moses. Of the Old Testament they possess the pentateuch only, in the Old Hebrew, or 'Samaritan', writing. Their literature consists chiefly of prayers and hymns. Their oldest chronicles date from the 12th century. Three times a year, viz., at the festival of unleavened bread, the feast of weeks, and the feast of tabernacles, they make a pilgrimage to the sacred Mt. Gerizim. They celebrate all the Mosaic festivals, but they offer sacrifices at the passover only.

Bigamy is permitted if the first wife be childless, and when a married man dies, his nearest relation, but not his brother, is bound to marry the widow." There are only between one and two hundred Samaritans left, and these no doubt will soon be gone.

As I wandered about on the top of Mt. Gerizim among the ruins of the Samaritan temple and other public and private buildings, I wondered why that hybrid nation had been brought into existence. The Bible says that God sent lions down upon those heathen people when they first settled in that land, and that caused them to seek the religion of the Jews. It seems that it has been the work of God, in part at least, that they have been a mixed nation of worshipers. God had given his word to the world, and that two nations might speak for the law of Moses instead of one, he places the pentateuch in the hands of the Samaritans. These people have a manuscript of the pentateuch which is perhaps the oldest in the world of that part of God's word. In all probability it is as old as the Christian era, and perhaps much older. Now when we remember that the Samaritans have been the enemies of both the Jews and the Christians, and thus have not obtained their writings from either since they became an organized people, about 500 B. C., and when we remember that their pentateuch agrees with ours in all its essentials, we have strong evidence for the antiquity and integrity of the five books of Moses.

The last place we visit on and around the sacred mountain is Jacob's Well, on the northeast border of the foot of Mt. Gerizim. It lies on the main road between Jerusalem and Galilee, and is no doubt the one where Jesus talked to the woman of Samaria. (John 4.) The woman said, "The well is deep;" and such indeed is true even today, though much trash has fallen into it, for it is 75 feet deep and 7 1-2 feet in diameter. "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain," said the woman, referring to Mt. Gerizim, "and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place to worship," bringing out the opposition between the worship of the two nations. Christ then used the opportunity to teach that the essence of his religion is entirely spiritual and that henceforth sacred places and things will be unknown forever. "Woman, believe me," He said, "the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. \* \* \* But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth." What a lesson we learn here at Jacob's Well at the foot of Mt. Gerizim! Had this teaching of Jesus been followed, there would have been no Romanism, Protestantism, nor any other ism except simple Christ-ism, for we all would have been one in Him. To worship God in spirit is to leave out all rites and ceremonies not fully understood by the worshipers, and all so-called sacred places and things, and center our minds and hearts and

lives on God and his beloved Son, wherever we may be. The Romish ceremonies performed in an unknown tongue are meaningless to the mass of the worshipers, and this is contrary to this spiritual service which Christ said should be rendered to God. To worship God in *truth* is to worship Him according to His word, for Jesus says, "Thy word is truth." Had we Protestants followed God's "truth" as we claim that we do, instead of our "feelings," "the spirit of the times," and the doctrines of men, as we actually are doing, there would not be the confusion among us that there is, and we should be more in favor with God. May the Father help us to make our worship both spiritual and according to His truth, as our Master says it should be.

## XVI

### JOPPA.

**A**T SHECHEM we dismiss our muleteer and dragoman, and finish our journey to Jerusalem by carriage, zigzagging by the way of Joppa. On the way to Joppa as along other routes, we pass some of the old-time threshing-floors, like those mentioned in the Bible. Perhaps some of us think these floors are made of boards, but in this we are deceived. These threshing-floors are simply leveled places with the dirt packed hard, and they are usually built on a hill so as to catch the breeze. The unthreshed grain is scattered over it, and a sled-like arrangement with a flat bottom is drawn round and round over the grain. The sharp stones in the bottom of the sled serve the place of the teeth on the cylinder in a threshing machine. When the grain has been ground sufficiently in this way, the fan is then used, which is not as some might suppose an instrument for making a breeze, but a wooden scoop much like a snow shovel, and which is used to throw the mixed grain and chaff into the air. The breeze carries the chaff away, and the grain falls into a pile by itself. This process takes a long



while to get the wheat entirely separated from the chaff. The wheat is then gathered and the chaff is destroyed. The same process was in vogue in Palestine four thousand years ago. As I stand and watch them separating their grain from the chaff in this old-fashioned way, I think of John's words concerning the final separation of the good from the bad, "Whose fan is in his hand," said he, "and he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing-floor; and he will gather his wheat into his garner, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

After a tiresome drive of forty-two miles, we reach Joppa, our destination, late in the evening. This city of 35,000 inhabitants is on the sea coast, and is the landing place for travelers coming to Jerusalem. There is no harbor here, as is true of most of these coast cities in Syria, and the people alight from the steamship into little boats and are rowed to the shore. When the sea is rough, the getting into the little boat is not only not pleasant but dangerous. You descend the stairway on the side of the ship to a platform near the water's edge. If the waves are high the row boat is tossed like a cork, and you have to jump into it, or be thrust into it by the seamen, when a wave brings it near the platform. You feel relieved when you are safe in a seat in the little bark.

Joppa is an ancient city and is mentioned several times in the Bible. It was here that Jonah purchased passage on a ship when he was trying to

escape from his duty in preaching God's Word. In the days of Solomon it was the port for Jerusalem to which Hiram, king of Tyre, sent timber from the Lebanon Mountains in floats for the building of the temple. (2 Chron. 2:16.) Also when the second temple was built after the return from Babylonish captivity, timber was brought from the Lebanon Mountains to Joppa, and thence carried to Jerusalem.

Christianity was early introduced into this place. It was here that Peter was on the housetop when he had the vision which showed him that the wall of partition between Jew and Gentile was broken down. (Acts 10.) Here, too, is where Dorcas lived and performed her good works, and where she was restored to life by Peter when she died. (Acts 9.) God did not put this little incident into His Book merely to fill it up, but to leave an example of good works for future generations, and to show to the readers that the apostle was heaven-sent because of the miracle he performed. What a contrast between Dorcas' simple way of helping the poor, and the complex way of our modern women! These are the days of organization and all of our work must be done through institutions of our own devising. To carry the gospel to the people, we must have several different kinds of missionary organizations. To make people temperate, we must have temperance societies attached to the church. To help poor preachers, we must have ministerial relief funds. To develop the

young people, we must have Endeavor societies. To aid poor people, we must have aid and Doreas societies. Little religious work is done any more except through institutions attached to the church. The simple truth is that the church is organized to death. The Church as established by Christ and the apostles did all the good work that it is necessary for man to do, and they had no organization except the local church. We must not delegate to a few the work which belongs to all Christians. Every Christian should be a missionary society, an aid society, a Doreas society, an Endeavor society, a temperance society, and a fund, so far as he is able, to relieve poor ministers and all others who are needy. It is not more organizations that we want, but more work as individual Christians like Paul and Doreas. This is God's way, and it is the best.

What a sad and yet joyful picture it was to see the poor widows gathered at the bier of Doreas showing the garments which she had made for them while she was living;—sad, because such a good woman had left them; joyful, because she had been good and had lived well-pleasing to her Lord! If you were to die, dear reader, could the poor and helpless of earth gather around your silent form and tell of many deeds of love which you performed? Could they say, That was a good man, and the world is made better and happier by his life? Or could they, on the other hand, look down upon your silent features without a tear and

say within their hearts as they pass by, What a cold, selfish life he lived; I hope my life may not be like his?

Is it not true, after all has been said, that the devoted and self-sacrificing Christian life, is the happiest life that can be lived? When you spend a day in earthly pleasure, you lie down at night feeling unsatisfied, and looking forward to another day of worldly enjoyment. You are not content and never can be with such transient joys. The earthly pleasures of this life are like the bubbles which the boy blows with his clay pipe and basin of suds. How beautiful they are in the sun, with all the colors of the rainbow! He runs after them in his play, but when he touches them—they are gone. How beautiful and enticing are the ungodly pleasures of this world! But when you grasp them—they are passed away forever. When, however, you have spent a day in the service of God, trying to advance His kingdom among men, you lie down at night satisfied in your mind and knowing that you shall be rewarded for all the good you have done. You are happy in the sacrifices you have made in order to try to make the world better. Your joy in this world is great and continuous, and you know that it will last through eternity, inasmuch as the Sweet Singer of Israel has said, "In thy presence there is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

You may spend your days seeking the praise of men, but soon the shout of the multitude will pass away. You may toil and struggle, dear friend, to make a name for yourself among the children of men, but it will do you no good when you lie cold in death. You may spend your time seeking popularity in your little community, but it will avail you nothing when the scenes of earth are fading from you. "The paths of glory lead but to the grave." Why should we not seek the praise of God rather than the praise of men? The laurel wreath which men may give will soon wither, but the crown which God will give is incorruptible and will never fade away.

And what will you do with your riches when you come to die? They will not recommend you to God but will rather be a witness against you. You have spent your days hoarding up, perhaps for ungodly children to squander, and you have closed your heart to the cry of the poor and needy. You have heard the Macedonian call for the gospel, but you have stopped your ears. In your own church you have measured your giving by some poor brother who has little of this world's goods. You brought nothing into this world and it is certain that you can carry nothing out. How sad to know that many people, yea many professed Christians, leave ten thousand dollars behind them, but not one dollar ahead. Covetousness is as much idolatry now as it was in Paul's day, and no idolater hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God and

Christ. God save us from this prevailing sin of this age and country!

We thank thee, O Lord, for the life of Dorcas, and the lesson of simplicity and self-sacrifice which it brings to us!

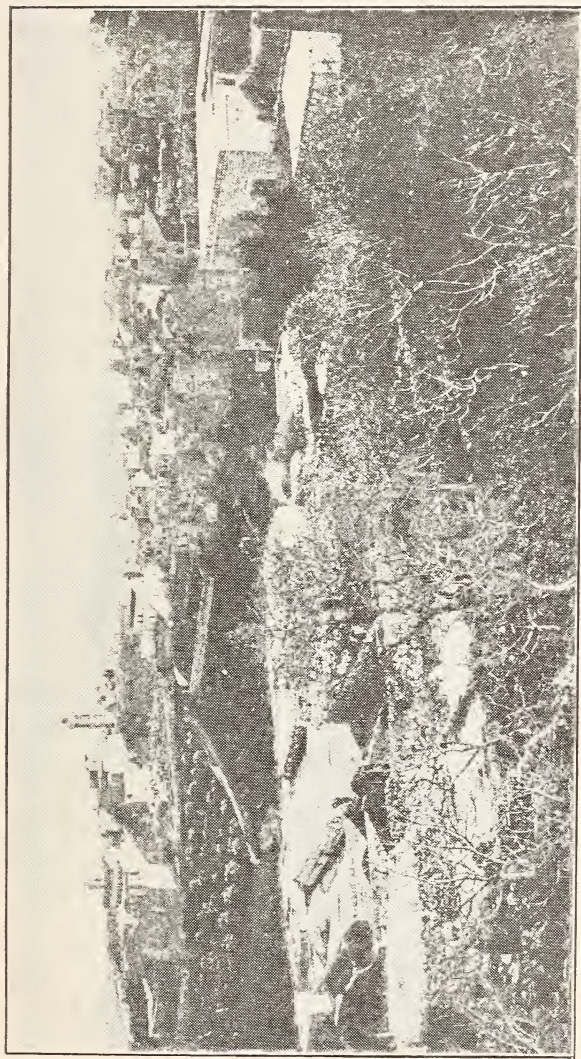


## BETHLEHEM AND HEBRON

THE DISTANCE from Joppa to Jerusalem by the carriage road is forty-one miles. At last we have reached the most famous city in the world,—famous, not because of its size or wealth, but because from it went forth a system of laws which is the foundation of all the codes of the civilized countries of the world. But before we come to Jerusalem in our description, let us take two side trips to the south and east of the city. Let us go first to Bethlehem and Hebron by carriage, and enjoy together the day among the historic scenes. Four miles from Jerusalem and one mile from Bethlehem, we pass a structure called the Tomb of Rachel. Of course the intelligent traveler does not believe that that very building is the one in which Rachel was placed when she died, but he has many reasons to believe that this is the spot, or at least very near it, where the favorite wife of Jacob was buried. Throughout the Christian era this has been regarded as the place where Rachel was buried, and also in Old Testament times. “And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath (the same is

Bethlehem). And Jacob set up a pillar upon her grave. The same is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this [Moses'] day.'" (Gen. 35:19.) In the days of Samuel, Rachel's sepulcher was pointed out. (1 Sam. 10:2.) Thus the Bible and tradition cause us to believe that the Tomb of Rachel was near Bethlehem, and this fact helps us to appreciate a prophecy fulfilled at the birth of Christ. When Herod heard that Jesus a king was to be born in Bethlehem, he sent and slew all the children there and in its borders. By a beautiful figure in which the woman whose tomb was in their midst and whose memory they all loved, is used for the women of that community, Jeremiah describes their sorrow thus, "A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and mourning, *Rachel* weeping for her children; and she would not be comforted, because they are not." (Matt. 2:18.)

One mile further brings us to Bethlehem, so famed in sacred lore. Here Ruth, the Moabitess, came to live with her mother-in-law, and here David, her noted descendant, was raised. Here, too, was the home of three of David's mighty men, —Joab, Asahel and Abishai. (2 Sam. 2:32.) It was not, however, till after the birth of Christ here that Bethlehem became a city of much size, and it now has about 8,000 inhabitants. Perhaps you are wondering whether can be ascertained the exact place where Jesus was born. Of course the Greek and Roman Catholics have all prominent biblical places localized; and in Bethlehem they



Bethlehem, Where Jesus Was Born

show you the very spot where Jesus was born! Yet, even before either of these churches was developed out of the general apostasy, Justin Martyr, who lived in the second century, said that Christ was born in a cavern in Bethlehem. The Church of St. Mary is presumably built over the cavern, part of which church was probably built in the fourth century.

From Bethlehem we continue south, past the so-called Pools of Solomon. These pools are three in number and mostly hewn in the rock. The largest is 194 yards long, on an average of 56 yards wide, and at places is 84 feet deep. In ancient times drinking water was brought into Jerusalem from these pools. The only evidence that these pools were made by Solomon is found in Eccl. 2:6, where the wise man says, "I made me pools of water to water therefrom the forest where trees were reared."

Before we reach Hebron, we digress from the main road to see the traditional Oak of Mamre. Of course no one with any sense would believe that this oak was living in Abraham's day, and yet it is a tree whose trunk is hundreds of years old. It is 32 feet in circumference at the bottom, and was regarded as the Oak of Abraham as far back as the sixteenth century; hence it must be several hundred years older than that. Leaving the oak, we soon reach Hebron, perhaps the oldest city of Palestine, and a place now of nearly 20,000 inhabitants.





One of the Pools of Solomon, Near Bethlehem

In Num. 13:22, it is said that Hebron was founded seven years before Zoan, i. e. Tanis, the chief city of lower Egypt. In Gen. 13:18, it is said that "Abraham moved his tent, and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built there an altar unto Jehovah." It was here that the three angels of God came to him and told him of the coming destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha. When Sarah died, (Gen. 23), Abraham purchased from Ephron the Hittite, the cave of Machpelah, as a family burial ground, and the three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were buried here. When Joshua led the children of Israel against the Canaanites, he destroyed Hebron, and killed the inhabitants. (Josh. 10:37.) Afterwards, Hebron was assigned to Caleb, who made it his home. David spent a long time in the region of Hebron, and after Saul's death he reigned seven and a half years from this place. It was at the gates of Hebron that Abner was slain by Joab, and David caused the murderers of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, to be hanged by the pool of Hebron. Hebron afterwards became the headquarters of the rebellious Absalom, but after that period it is rarely mentioned. The Mohammedans have a mosque over the cave where they say Abraham is buried, and they will not permit Christians to enter the building. A few of royal blood have seen the cave, but it was only through a special permit from the Sultan. It is with all these historic events passing



through his mind that the Bible student pays a visit to this ancient city of Hebron.

## XVIII

### JERICHO, THE JORDAN RIVER, AND THE DEAD SEA

THE TRIP to the Jordan River occupies two days, one for going and the other for coming. Our route leads us through Bethany on the southeast border of the Mount of Olives, a town which is now composed of about forty hovels. It was here that Lazarus and Mary and Martha lived, and here Lazarus died and was raised to life by Jesus. The so-called Tomb of Lazarus is shown to the traveler, and also the traditional site of the house of Mary and Martha; but as these sites have changed in the course of the centuries, we conclude that there is nothing certain about these places visited by Christ.

When travelers go to Jericho, they are supposed to take one or two soldiers with them at their own expense as a protection. Now as in the days of the Good Samaritan, there are thieves and robbers along the road. Especially is there danger when there is war among the nomadic tribes. As everything seems to be quiet among the tribes now, and as no one is astir in the guard house as we pass it very early in the morning, we leave the soldiers



Bethany, Where Lived Mary and Martha and Lazarus

behind and trust to the revolver which our guide has.

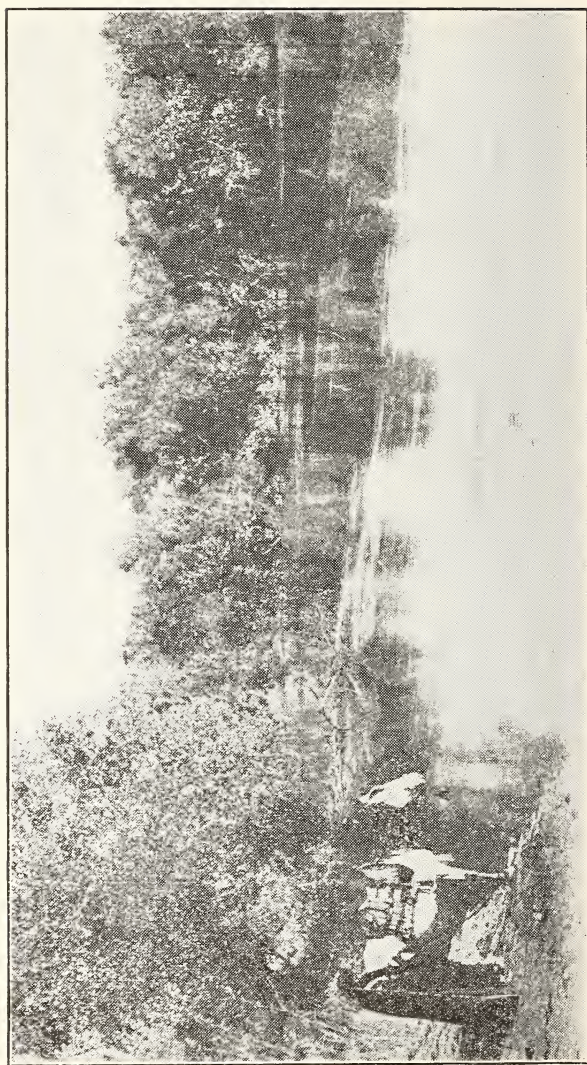
Down, down, down, we go, all the way to the Jordan Valley, and we remember that the Bible speaks about going *down* from Jerusalem to Jericho. And when we remember, too, that it speaks about going *up* to Jerusalem and *down* to Cæsarea, etc., we are convinced that the writers of the New Testament were well acquainted with the geography of Palestine and were actual residents there, some of the higher destructive critics to the contrary notwithstanding. About half way between Jerusalem and Jericho is an inn which is localized as the scene of the Good Samaritan. (Luke 10:30-37.) On the left of the carriage road as we come nearer the Jordan Valley, is a deep ravine down which a brook flows to the river, supposed to be the brook Cherith, where Elijah went when the great drouth was on and where he was fed by the ravens. (1 Kings 17:3, 5.)

Soon we reach the village of Jericho in the valley of the Jordan with its three hundred souls living in mud huts. The place, however, was not always as insignificant as it is now. When Joshua crossed the Jordan, he found a walled city here, with a vegetation around it which was very rich. It is sometimes called the City of Palms, and down to the seventh century of our era date palms were common, though now they have almost entirely disappeared. Around the city lay a large and flourishing oasis of corn and hemp fields. In spite

of many conquests, Jericho continued to flourish. Herod embellished Jericho with palaces, and made it his winter residence. It was here that Zaccheus climbed into a sycamore tree to see Jesus as he was passing by on his last journey to Jerusalem. (Luke 19.) Near Jericho is a fountain called Elisha's Spring, which has been regarded from a remote time as the water which Elisha healed with salt. (2 Kings 2:19-22.)

The Jordan River rises north of the Sea of Galilee, flows into it at the north and out of it at the south, and continues its downward course to the Dead Sea. The distance on an air line between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea is only 65 miles, but the river is so meandering in its course between those two seas that it covers three times that distance. The water is muddy and the current is swift, owing to the 3,000<sup>+</sup> feet of fall which it has in its course. Near its mouth the river is 100 feet wide. The valley near Jericho is several miles wide, and has many low bushes and thickets, from which in ancient times the lions were driven out at the "swelling of the Jordan." (Jer. 49:19.) Some religious tourists who have more prejudice than honesty, go home after a few minutes' visit to the Jordan River, and because they see the river is swift tell the people that it was impossible for John to have immersed the people in such waters. If every immersionist would draw such hasty conclusions when he first views the banks of a stream in America, of course





The River Jordan, in Which Jesus Was Baptized

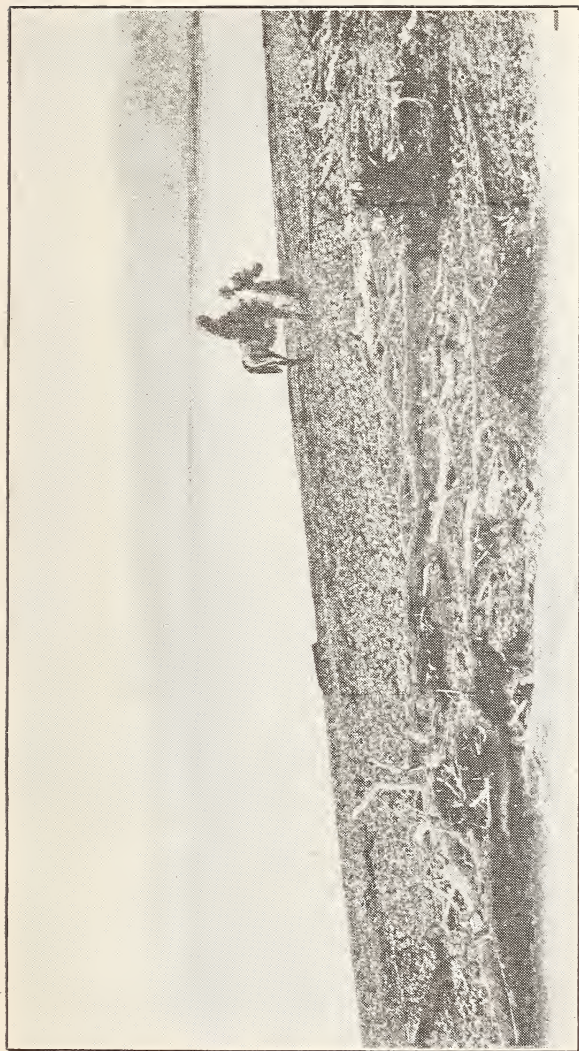


there would be little immersing done, for sometimes a man has to go for miles to find a suitable place to baptize. If T. DeWitt Talmage could immerse a man in the Jordan River, why could not John the Baptist have immersed Christ here? A bit of history from Bædeker's guide book concerning the immersions which have been done and are still being done here, throw such prejudiced teachers into disrepute:

“Baptism in the Jordan was as early as the time of Constantine (fourth century) deemed a special privilege. In the sixth century, Antoninus found a great concourse of pilgrims here. He records that both banks were paved with marble; that a wooden cross rose in the middle of the stream; and that, after the water had been blessed by the priest, the pilgrims entered it, each wearing a linen garment, which was carefully preserved in order afterwards to be used as a winding-sheet. \* \* \* Disorderly scenes frequently took place here. From an early period the pilgrims were conducted, or rather hurried into the water by Beduin guides (sometimes accompanied by the pasha), and quarrels among the Christians were not uncommon. Down to the present time, the Greeks attach great importance to the bath in the Jordan as the termination of a pilgrimage. The great caravan starts for the Jordan immediately after the ceremonies of Easter, and the encampment lighted with pine torches on the bank of the river presents a quaint and interesting

spectacle. The priests wade into the water breast deep, and dip in the stream the men, women and children as they approach in their white garments."

While visiting the Jordan, we must of course run down to see the Dead Sea. This body of water is called the Salt Sea and Eastern Sea in the Bible, and by the Greeks and Romans, the Sea of Asphalt and the Dead Sea. This sea is 47 miles long, and at its greatest breadth is 9 1-2 miles wide. On the east and west sides there are precipitous mountains, which in many places run up to the water's edge. The Dead Sea is 1,292 feet below the Mediterranean Sea and 3,786 feet below Jerusalem, that city being 2,494 feet above the Mediterranean. From these figures, one can easily see what a depression in the earth the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea make. Standing on the Russian church tower on the Mount of Olives, one can see at a glance how far below the valley lies. It is estimated that 6 1-2 million tons of water fall into the sea daily, the whole of which must be carried off by evaporation as the sea has no outlet. The evaporation of the water leaves the solid substance still there, which gives it the disagreeable taste which it has. The water is about one-fourth solid substance, seven per cent. of which is common salt, and its brackish, oily, salty taste, is unpleasant. No living being of any kind is found in this water. We have heard that it is impossible to sink in these waves, and so we



The Dead Sea and the Hills of Judea

take a bath to see; and we find that the solid substance in the water is so great that one's body will not sink. It is hard, however, to swim in the water because one's feet tend to come above the surface. We lie here on our backs in the water with both hands and feet above. After plunging around for awhile, we find that we have difficulty in breathing; and we reason that the same force that is holding us up is pressing against our lungs and making it difficult to get our breath. When we come out, I imagine we feel like an eel. One plunge in the Dead Sea is enough to satisfy one's curiosity.

Many people believe that the Dead Sea occupies the site of Sodom and Gomorrha; and we know at least that it harmonizes with the geographical details of those cities of the plain which God destroyed. In 1848, W. F. Lynch, of the U. S. Navy, led a government expedition to the Jordan and Dead Sea to explore those bodies of water, and in his narrative on pp. 252-3, he expresses his interesting conclusion thus:

“From the summit of these cliffs, in a line a little north of west, about sixteen miles distant, is Hebron, a short distance from which Dr. Robinson found the dividing ridge between the Mediterranean and this sea. From Beni Na'im, the reputed tomb of Lot, upon that ridge, it is supposed that Abraham looked ‘toward *all* the land of the plain,’ and beheld the smoke, ‘as the smoke of a furnace.’ The inference from the

Bible that this entire chasm was a plain sunk and 'overwhelmed' by the wrath of God, seems to be sustained by the extraordinary character of our surroundings. The bottom of this sea consists of two submerged plains, the former averaging *thirteen*, the latter about *thirteen hundred* feet below the surface. Through the northern, and largest and deepest one, in a line corresponding with the bed of the Jordan, is a ravine, which again seems to correspond with the Wady el Jeib, or ravine within a ravine, at the south end of the sea.

"Between the Jabok and this sea, we unexpectedly found a breakdown in the bed of the Jordan. If there be a similar breakdown in the water-courses to the south of the sea, accompanied with like volcanic characters, there can scarce be a doubt that the whole Ghor (valley) has sunk from some extraordinary convulsion; preceded most probably, by an eruption of fire, and a general conflagration of the bitumen which abounded in the plain. I shall ever regret that we were not authorized to explore the southern Ghor to the Red Sea.

"But it is for the learned to comment on the facts which we have laboriously collected. Upon ourselves, the result is a decided one. We entered upon this sea with conflicting opinions. One of the party was skeptical, and another, I think, a professed unbeliever of the Mosaic account. After twenty-two days' close investigation, if I am not mistaken, we are unanimous in the conviction of the truth of the scriptural account of the de-

struction of the cities of the plain. I record with diffidence the conclusions we have reached, simply as a protest against the shallow deductions of *would-be* unbelievers."



## XIX

### ENVIRONS OF JERUSALEM

VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT, VALLEY OF HINNOM,  
TOMBS OF THE KINGS, TOMBS OF THE JUDGES,  
EN-ROGEL, POOLS IN AND AROUND  
JERUSALEM.

**B**EFORE entering this most noted city of Jerusalem, let us spend a little time in the environs, for they are as historic as the city itself. On the east, is the Valley of Jehoshaphat, called also the Valley of the Kedron, which is formed by the hills on which Jerusalem sits and by the Mount of Olives, and down which flows the brook Kedron. The upper part of the valley is broad and planted with olive and almond trees, and the lower part is narrower, getting deeper rapidly as it descends toward the south. There is a tradition that this valley will be the scene of the last judgment, founded on a misunderstanding of the passage in Joel 3:2. The Christians and Mahometans have probably borrowed the idea from the Jews, and so the Jews and Mahometans bury their dead in the valley.—the former on the east side and the latter on the west. At the

resurrection, the sides are expected to move farther apart so as to accommodate the vast throng which will appear there. The Mahometans say that at the judgment a thin wire rope will be stretched across the valley from the wall of Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives, and that Christ will sit on the wall and Mahomet on the mount as judges. All men must pass over the valley on the rope. The angels will keep the righteous from falling, but the wicked will fall into hell. The idea of a bridge of this kind was borrowed from the Persian religion.

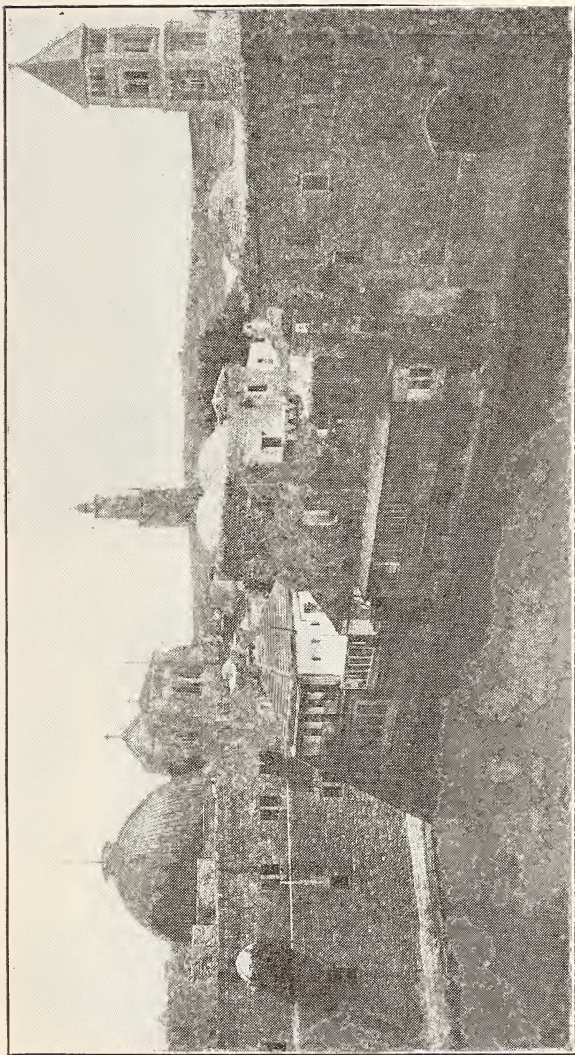
The Valley of Hinnom begins on the west side of the city and runs south and east getting deeper and deeper, and joins the Valley of Jehoshaphat southeast of the city. The valley was called in Greek *Ge Ben Hinnom* (valley of the son of Hinnom). At one time children were sacrificed here. (Jer. 7:3.) Josiah defiled the place (2 Kings 23:10), so that the people would no longer burn their children here; and from that time on, the spot seems to have become the place where the filth of the city was thrown, and thus became a point of detestation to the Jews. From this circumstance, the later Jews applied the name Gehenna, which is a contraction of *Ge Hinnom*, to the final abode of the wicked. A little farther down the valley and past the point where the Valley of Jehoshaphat and the Valley of Hinnom meet, is a spring called Job's Well, from a late Mohammedan legend. This well is probably the

En-Rogel ("fuller's spring"), mentioned in Joshua 15:7, as the border between the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. It was here that Adonijah prepared a feast for his friends on the occasion of his attempted usurpation of the throne of David. (1 Kings 1:8.) One can realize how deep this valley is when he learns that the place of this well is 345 feet below the temple plateau in the city.

North of Jerusalem there is little of historic note to be seen except some tombs which have the high-sounding titles of "Tombs of the Judges" and "Tombs of the Kings." There is no evidence to show that the former of these were the burial places of the ancient judges of Israel, nor that the latter are the sepulchers of the Jewish kings. They are, however, the burial places of wealthy people, and they give one a good idea of the ancient rock-hewn sepulchers. The Tombs of the Kings have one entrance which leads into a chamber from which one can go into several other chambers, in all of which there are shelves in the walls where bodies were placed. The entrance to these tombs is like the entrance to Christ's tomb, for it has a stone to roll to the mouth of the sepulcher. These stones are round slabs, like the old-fashioned solid wooden wheels, and are rolled in large stone grooves to the mouth of the cavern or away from it.

But perhaps you would like to know something of the water supply of Jerusalem. This is an important subject because it deals with a much-dis-

cussed ordinance in the Christian world. Some people say that the three thousand on the day of Pentecost could not have been immersed because there was not enough water in Jerusalem to immerse them, and they did not have time to go to the Pools of Solomon, twenty miles away. My attention has recently been called to a book written by a man who had been to Palestine and who takes that position. I shall place a few facts before the reader concerning the pools at Jerusalem and let him judge for himself. The Pool of Siloam is south of the city and is the one in which Christ told the blind man to wash. (John 9:7.) This pool is 52 feet long and 18 feet wide. Near this cistern is another called the Lower Pool of Siloam. Just north of the temple plateau and within the city is a large pool which was formerly regarded as the Pool of Bethesda. It is 363 feet long, 126 feet wide, and lies 68 feet below the level of the temple hill. It now has rubbish in its bottom to a depth of 20 feet. In the Valley of Hinnom and southwest of the city is the Sultan's Pool, which is 555 feet long, 219 feet wide, and is 35 feet deep on the north side and 41 feet deep on the south side. The Mamilla Pool lies west of the city in a Mohammedan grave-yard, and is frequently identified with the "upper pool" of the Old Testament. It is 291 feet long, 192 feet wide, and 19 feet deep. The Patriarch's Pool, called also the Pool of Hezekiah, is within the city close to the Jaffa gate. It is 240 feet long, and 144 feet wide. This pool had a



The Pool of Hezekiah, in Jerusalem



little water in it when I saw it in September. These are all ancient pools and had water in them in Bible times, though nearly all of them now have fallen into decay. All these pools I myself saw, but I take the measurements from the guide book. Now in any one of these six pools three thousand people could have been immersed. Besides these pools, there is a large cistern 246 yards in circumference which is on the temple plateau and within a stone's throw of where the ancient temple stood, and which has a rock-hewn stair-case leading to it. This place, too, could have been used for immersing. Our only conclusion concerning a man who has visited Jerusalem and who says that there was not enough water in that city to immerse three thousand people, is that if he had followed a Bædeker's guide book and searched out some of the *ancient* things instead of following a superficial guide about, listening to monkish tales and viewing the *modern* sites, he would not have made such big blunders concerning the water supply of ancient Jerusalem, and he would not have made such hasty and false conclusions in favor of an unscriptural practice.



## GENERAL VIEW OF MODERN JERUSALEM

**A**ND NOW we are ready to visit the most interesting city in the world,—the city where have happened the greatest events which have been enacted among men. Our minds go back to some of the events which have transpired here. Jerusalem has been called “the city of David,” and well it has been, for it was David who made it the capital city of the Jews. The town was the stronghold of the Jebusites when David took it in his reign. Mt. Zion was the fortress, and was such an important point in the town that the city itself was sometimes called after it, “the daughter of Zion.” As Jerusalem is a type of the city which John saw come down from heaven, Christians often speak of the home of the soul as “Zion.” After the death of David, Solomon embellished the city, and built here the temple. At the division of the people into two kingdoms, Jerusalem became the capital of the kingdom of Judah. It is with sadness that we think of this city and the continued disobedience of its inhabitants. Finally, in about the year 600 B. C.,

God sent Nebuchadnezzar against the place, who destroyed the city, razed the temple to the ground, and carried away into Babylonish captivity the remnant of the inhabitants. After seventy years as servants in a foreign land, we see a few thousand Jews struggling back in the providence of God to become again a nation among the peoples of the earth. After many hardships they build again the walls of their beloved city, and dedicate the second temple to the Lord. Through many changes the city passes until in the last days of the Jewish dispensation the city is honored by being the place where the Son of God taught many of his lessons. In harmony with the prophecies we know that the law has gone forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

We see the city again with a besieging army around it. This time, the Romans are the instrument of God to punish the Jews for their disobedience. The taking and sacking of the city is one of the most tragic events of its kind in the annals of history. Hundreds of thousands of people have gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate their sacred feasts, and while there their own anarchy brings the Romans against them. Finally, after hundreds of thousands of people have perished the city is destroyed, according to the prophecy of Christ, and the remnant of the Jews is scattered. Without a country, they have been wanderers ever since. In the year 130 A. D., the Emperor Hadrian erected a town on the site of Jerusalem, and named it

Aelia Capitolina, but the Jews under Bar Cochba raised a rebellion, and from that time on for many years they were prohibited from setting their feet within its walls. In the fourth century, the Emperor Constantine permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem, but in 339 they again took up arms against the Romans. A little later, the Emperor Julian the Apostate gave the Jews the liberty again of building their temple, thinking thereby to overthrow the religion of Jesus, but fire came from the ruins of the temple and frightened the workmen away, an occurrence which Christians in those days said was a divine manifestation against the efforts of Julian. In the seventh century, the city fell into the hands of the Mohammedans who have held it most of the time since. It was their oppression of the pilgrims which led to the Crusades in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when many great mobs of people under the name of armies marched from Europe into Asia, most of them to die there by sword, famine and disease. Since that time, the Turks, who are Mohammedans, have held the city, and they have possession of it now. Jerusalem is situated directly west of the Mediterranean Sea 32 miles, but is 41 miles from Joppa by the carriage road, which is north of west. It is 14 miles from the Dead Sea, and is three-fourths of a mile above that body of water, and half a mile above the Mediterranean Sea. The wall around the city was built in the Middle Ages, and is 38 1-2 feet high with 34 towers and 8 gates, one

of which is closed, and is 2 1-2 miles in circumference. The town possesses few open spaces, and the streets are ill-paved and crooked, many of them being blind alleys and causing much trouble to one who is trying to make his way over the city alone.

“As Jerusalem,” says Bædeker, “possesses no springs except the Spring of Mary, the inhabitants obtain their supply of water from cisterns, the roofs of the houses and every available space being made to contribute the rain that falls upon them. Owing to the scarcity of wood, the houses are entirely built of stone. The court with its cistern forms the central point of each group of rooms. A genuine Jerusalem dwelling house consists of a number of separate apartments, each with an entrance and a dome-shaped roof of its own. These vaulted chambers are pleasantly cool in summer. The rooms are of different heights and are irregularly grouped. Between them run stair-cases and passages in the open air, a very uncomfortable arrangement in rainy weather, in consequence of which it has become the custom with the women to provide themselves with pattens. Some houses have flat roofs, but under these is always concealed a cupola. The cupolas do not spring from the tops of the walls, but a little within them, so that it is possible to walk around the outsides of the cupolas. The roofs are frequently provided with parapets of earthen pipes, constructed in a triangular form. Pots and troughs for flowers are built

into the roofs and courts by the architects. In the walls of the rooms are niches serving as cupboards. In some of the houses there are no glass windows; nor are chimneys by any means universal, the charcoal smoke being in their absence allowed to escape by the doors and windows. The rooms are usually warmed with charcoal braziers. Only houses built on the European plan and the hotels are provided with stoves. The floors are composed of very hard cement.

“The climate, on the whole, is healthy. The fresh sea breeze tempers the heat even during the hot months; at night there is frequently a considerable fall of temperature. The cistern water, too, is good and not in the least unhealthy when the cisterns are kept clean. The water in the cisterns certainly gets low toward autumn, and the poorer classes then have recourse to water from the pools. This, combined with the miasma from the heaps of rubbish, frequently causes fever, dysentery, etc.

“According to a recent estimate (about 1897), the population numbers about 60,000, of whom 7,000 are Muslims, 41,000 Jews and 12,800 Christians. The Christians include 4,000 Latins, 200 United Greeks, 50 United Armenians, 6,000 Orthodox Greeks, 800 Armenians, 100 Copts, 100 Ethiopians, 100 Syrians, 1,400 Protestants.

“The number of Jews has greatly risen of late years. In spite of the fact that they are forbidden to immigrate or to possess landed property, the number steadily increases, both of those who desire

to be buried in the Holy City and of those who intend to subsist on the charity of their European brethren, from whom they receive their regular allowance, and for whom they pray at the holy places. Sir M. Monte Fiore, Baron Rothschild, and others, together with the Aliance Israelite, have done much to ameliorate the condition of their poor brethren at Jerusalem by their munificent benefactions. The Jews have over seventy synagogues in Jerusalem."



## THE SITE OF THE TEMPLE

WHEN we say that this temple plateau on which we are now standing is the most interesting religious spot in the world, we are stating only that which is true. It is a place which has been held sacred by Jews, Mohammedans and superstitious Christians for thousands of years.

When Abraham was told to offer his son as a sacrifice on a mountain in the land of Moriah, it is probable, from the biblical narrative and from tradition, that this is the hill. (Gen. 22 :2.) Upon this very mountain was situated the threshing-floor which David bought of Ornan the Jebusite as a place to offer sacrifice to stay the plague which God had brought for David's sin in numbering Israel. (2 Sam. 24.) It was upon this very mountain, too, that Solomon built the magnificent temple, which, with its successor, has made the place so glorious. (2 Chron. 3 :1.) And as Jesus, the greatest religious teacher the world has ever seen, presented many of his lessons here, and as Mohammed considered that the place was next to Mecca in sacredness, we see

that it is a central point for three of the most prominent religions in the world.

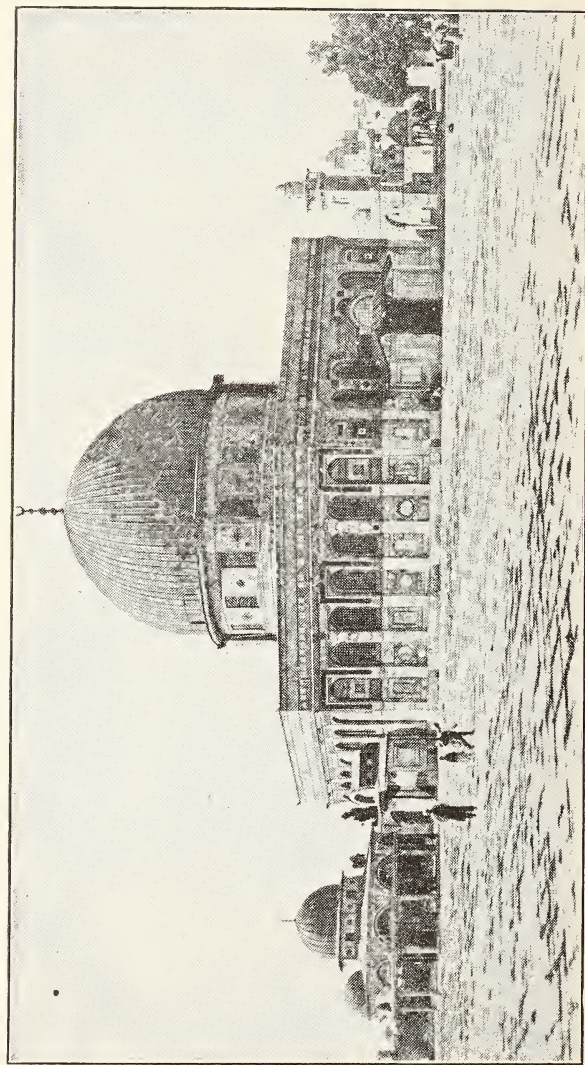
The temple which Solomon built here was destroyed about 600 B. C., when the people were carried away into Babylonish captivity; and another, though inferior temple, was built after the return. (2 Kings 23; Ezra, Nehemiah.) This second temple was remodeled by Herod a few years before Christ, and was made practically a new structure. When the city was taken and destroyed by the Romans in 70 A. D., the temple was completely demolished as Christ foretold, and not one stone was left upon another. On this site, the Emperor Hadrian erected a large temple to Jupiter, and put in it a statue of that god. Since the seventh century, the Mohammedans have had possession of the place most of the time, and the beautiful Dome of the Rock, sometimes called the Mosque of Omar, is situated on the spot, being built in the early part of the Mohammedan rule here.

This temple area was not always as level as it now is. The top of the hill has been leveled off and the corners have been built up to accommodate the buildings which have been erected here. The plateau is 636 yards on the west, 518 on the east, 351 on the north, and 309 on the south; so we see that there was room on this level place for many buildings besides the temple. Besides the Dome of the Rock, there are several other sacred Mohammedan buildings here, still leaving, however, much open space upon the plateau. At the southeast corner of this

area where the surface has been built up to make the plateau larger are sub-structures known as Solomon's Stables. There is no reliable evidence that Solomon used these vaults as stables, and yet the crusaders did in the Middle Ages. Many Jews sought refuge in these places in their struggles against the Romans. The vault extends 91 yards from east to west, and 60 yards from north to south.

But perhaps you wonder why this building, called the Dome of the Rock, is so named. It is so called because of the great rock over which the beautiful structure is reared, a rock sacred in both Jewish and Moslem tradition. A few paragraphs from the guide-book give the reader an interesting sample of the mixture of foolish traditions with facts, so prevalent in this land of religious story.

"We now proceed to the Holy Rock itself. It is 58 feet long and 44 feet wide, and rises about 6 1-2 feet above the surrounding pavement. The earliest reference to it is found in the Talmud, or Jewish tradition. As in other sanctuaries of antiquity, such as Delphi, the stone is said to cover the mouth of an abyss with a subterranean torrent, the waters of which were heard roaring far beneath. According to Jewish tradition, Abraham and Melchisedec sacrificed here, Abraham was on the point of slaying Isaac here, and the rock is said to have been anointed by Jacob. As it was regarded as the central point of the world, the Ark of the Covenant is said once to have stood here, to have been afterward



The Mosque of Omar, on the Site of the Temple

concealed here by Jeremiah (but according to 2 Mace. 2:5 in a cave in Mt. Nebo), and still to lie buried beneath the sacred rock. On this rock also was written the '*shem*,' the great and unspeakable name of God. Jesus, says tradition, succeeded in reading it, and he was thus enabled to work his miracles. The rock before us can not be identified with the stone of foundation, of Jewish tradition, if only on account of its size; it is much too large ever to have stood in the 'holy of holies.' The probability is that the great sacrificial altar stood here, and traces of a channel for carrying off the blood have been discovered on the rock. Excavations, if permitted, would probably show that the natural hollow under the stone goes deeper into the earth and is really a cistern.

"The Muslims adopted and improved upon this tradition about the rock, as they did with so many other already existing Jewish traditions. According to them the stone hovers over the abyss without support. When we descend on the south side by the pulpit to the cavern beneath the rock we see a support, and all around the rock resting on a white-washed wall. The hollow sound heard by knocking the wall is not due to any cavity behind it, but to the mortar peeling off from the rock. In this cavern the cicerone points out the places where David and Solomon and Abraham and Elijah were in the habit of praying. Mohammed has also left the impression of his head on the rocky ceiling. The guide knocks on a round stone plate almost in the middle of the



floor; there is evidently a hollow underneath. The Muslims maintain that beneath this rock is the well of souls, where the souls of the deceased assemble to pray twice weekly. Some say that the rock came from Paradise, and that it rests upon a palm watered by a river of Paradise; beneath this palm are Asia, wife of Pharaoh, and Mary. Others maintain that these are the gates of hell. At the last day the Kaaba of Mecca will come to the Sakhra, for here will sound the blast of the trumpet which will announce the judgment. God's throne will then be planted upon the rock. Mohammed declared that one prayer here was better than a thousand elsewhere. He himself prayed here, to the right of the holy rock, and from hence he was translated to heaven on the back of El Burak, his miraculous steed. It was in the course of his direct transit to heaven that his body pierced the round hole in the ceiling of the rock which we still observe. On this occasion, moreover, the rock opened its mouth, as it did when it greeted Omar, and it therefore has a 'tongue' over the entrance to the cavern. As the rock was desirous of accompanying Mohammed to heaven, the angel Gabriel was obliged to hold it down, and the marks of his hand are still shown on the west side of the rock.

“A number of other marvels are shown. In front of the north entrance there is let into the ground a slab of jasper, into which Mohammed drove nineteen nails; a nail falls out at the end of every epoch, and when all are gone the end of the world



will come. One day the devil succeeded in destroying all but three and a half, but was fortunately detected and stopped by the angel Gabriel. \* \* \* Hairs from Mohammed's beard are also preserved here."

And yet, separating fact from fiction, we know that this plateau is the place of Abraham's offering of Isaac, of David's sacrifice at Ornan's threshing-floor, of Solomon's temple, and much of Christ's teaching, and thus is an interesting point to students of God's Word.

PLACE OF CHRIST'S DEATH AND  
BURIAL

**B**UT PERHAPS you are anxious to know whether the place where Christ was crucified and the place where he was buried, can be seen today. The death and burial and resurrection of Christ are, indeed, the facts of the gospel and the central thoughts of the entire Bible; yea, they are the most important events which have happened among men. The exact spot, however, where these wonderful events occurred can not be learned with certainty. The language of the New Testament (Matt. 28:11; Heb. 13:12), shows that Golgotha was on the outside of the city, for it speaks of the guard as going from the sepulcher "*into the city*"; and of Christ as "*suffering without the gate.*"

One reason why Christians today can not know the exact spot where many of the biblical events happened is because the Lord did not think them of any importance in his religion, and thus did not put them in his Word; and because, also, the early Christians paid no attention to such things. Under

the New Covenant, it is not the pilgrimage to a so-called sacred place which is well-pleasing to God, but it is the living of a new life according to his will. The earliest historian who speaks of the place of Christ's death is Eusebius who lived in the fourth century. He says that during the excavations in the reign of Constantine the sacred tomb of Christ was, contrary to all expectations, discovered. Later historians say that Helena, Constantine's mother, was prompted by a vision to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where by the aid of a miracle she found not only the holy sepulcher, but also the cross of Christ. The cross was cut to pieces, only a part of it being left at Jerusalem to be shown to pilgrims. History shows that in 336 a church was built over this so-called holy sepulcher. Of course, these were the days when the great apostasy was well along in its development, and we may expect the history of these times to be colored with the fables of the age. From that century to this, the buildings over these "sacred" spots have passed through many changes, being destroyed several times and built again. There are many chapels in this Church of the Holy Sepulcher supposed to be located on sacred places, but as they are founded on foolish traditions, we pass them by without further notice. The sepulcher which is shown to one now as the place where Christ was buried is made of marble, and is as different in form from the rock-hewn sepulcher mentioned in the New Testament, as it is in the substance of which it is

made. Only the ignorant and superstitious regard this marble tomb as the sepulcher of Christ. Many religious bodies in Christendom, such as the Greek and Roman Catholic churches, Armenians and Copts, are represented by chapels of some kind in this Church of the Holy Sepulcher, but I am glad that no Protestant denomination takes much interest in the place except through curiosity. We leave these superstitious acts for those whose standard is tradition instead of the Word of God.

At Easter times one of the greatest deceptions practised in the name of religion is perpetrated here by the Greek Catholic priests. As the circumstances show the unscrupulous disposition of the priests and the credulous nature of the pilgrims, we give the full description of the matter that the Protestant may appreciate the freedom of his religion from such superstition.

“One of the most disgraceful spectacles is the so-called miracle of the Holy Fire, in which the Latins participated down to the sixteenth century, but which has since been managed by the Greeks alone. On this occasion strangers are admitted to the galleries. The Greeks declare the miracle to date from the apostolic age, and it is mentioned by the monk Bernhard as early as the ninth century. Khalif Hakim was told that the priest used to besmear the wire by which the lamp was suspended over the sepulcher with resinous oil, and to set it on fire from the roof. The wild and noisy scene begins on Good Friday. The crowd passes the night in the

church in order to procure good places. On Easter eve, about 2 p. m., a procession of the superior clergy moves around the sepulcher, all lamps having been carefully extinguished because of the crowd. Some members of the higher order of the priesthood enter the chapel of the sepulcher, while the priests pray and the people are in the utmost suspense. At length, the fire which has come down from heaven is pushed through a window of the sepulcher, and there now follows an indescribable tumult, every one endeavoring to be the first to get his taper lighted. In a few seconds, the whole church is illuminated. This, however, never happens without fighting, and accidents generally occur owing to the crush. The sacred fire is carried home by the pilgrims. It is supposed to have the peculiarity of not burning human beings, and many of the faithful allow the flame to play upon their naked chests or other parts of their bodies. The spectators do not appear to take warning from the terrible catastrophe of 1834. On that occasion, there were upwards of 6,000 persons in the church, when a riot suddenly broke out. The Turkish guards, thinking they were attacked, used their weapons against the pilgrims, and in the scuffle that followed about 300 pilgrims were killed."

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES AND THE  
GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES lies east of the city of Jerusalem, between which two places is the valley of the Kidron. The highest point of the mountain is almost three hundred feet above the temple plateau. The slopes are cultivated, but the vegetation is not luxuriant. The principal trees are the olive, fig and carob. The roads are very stony and the high walls along some of them hinder the breeze as well as the view to the passer-by. A little village of poor stone cottages is near the top of the Mount. On the western slope of the hill are to be seen some ancient sepulchers which are greatly venerated by the Jews who call them the Tombs of the Prophets. From a very early time the Mount of Olives has been regarded as the mount of the ascension, but the passage in Luke 24:50, that "he led them out as far as to Bethany," which place lies one-half hour's ride southeast of the top of the hill, disproves the tradition. The superstitious people even show you a stone with the imprint of Christ's foot which he made as he ascended.



From the top of this mountain a magnificent view can be obtained, especially from the Belvedere Tower of the Russian buildings. To the east one looks down into the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea, which lie more than three-fourths of a mile below him. To the west he looks into the Valley of the Kidron, lying immediately below him, and beyond it is Jerusalem with its many dome-capped buildings. The most conspicuous part of the city is that which is the nearest, the temple plateau with the Dome of the Rock standing almost on the identical spot with the ancient temple. Tall minarets and the domes of churches rise above the other buildings, and hills on the other side of the city serve as a background to the beautiful scene. The city with its mediæval walls and ancient architecture presents an appearance which no doubt is much the same as it was in Christ's day. The view before the western traveler is so different from what he sees in his own land that he enjoys much the oriental ancient scene. As one stands upon this mountain drinking in the scenery, his mind is filled with the sacred events which have happened in the places now visible to his eyes, and he remembers that Christ looked down many times upon the city just as he is looking now.

But as we descend the mountain and make our way back to the city, we must stop at the Garden of Gethsemane, which lies in the bottom of the valley. The Greek and Latin churches both have

gardens here, and though we do not know that either stands on the identical spot where the Garden of Gethsemane was, still we know that they can not be far from it. The Latin garden is enclosed with a wall and contains eight very old olive trees whose trunks are split with age.

On Lord's day afternoon after a long stroll up and down the valleys around Jerusalem, I sit down to rest and muse a little before entering the eastern gate of the city. The sun is nearing the horizon in the west, and dark shadows are creeping over the Valley of the Kidron. I look across at the Mount of Olives and see the Garden of Gethsemane at its foot. What sad events happened here so many centuries ago! Jesus our Savior is about to finish his work on earth for fallen man. He has been with his disciples for the last time before death and eaten the paschal supper, and now with them he crosses the brook Kidron into the silent garden. Here his humanity asserts itself as he thinks of his responsibility in carrying the sins of the whole world. He knows that all his disciples will forsake him and that alone he must go as a sheep to the slaughter. His heart faints within him, and he is filled with sorrow. Taking Peter, James and John, he withdraws himself from the other disciples, and leaving the three, who soon fall asleep, he goes and prays alone. Great drops of sweat fall from his face as he pours out his soul to his God. "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me; never-

theless not my will, but Thine be done." What an example does Jesus here leave for his followers, of resignation into the divine Father's hand! Too often in the battles of life, Christians almost demand that God answer their prayers, and that, too, at once and in the way they have arranged in their own minds. We must change our spirits and say with Jesus, "Not my will, but Thine be done," or else our prayers will never be heard in heaven. God knows best what His children should have.

But what makes Jesus sorrow so there in the garden? Is it merely the death he is to suffer? I can not think this, for many before and after him have marched boldly to a death as cruel as the one he is to suffer. It is the burdens which rest upon him that bear him down. Others might die for a few of their fellow mortals, but Jesus dies for all mankind. He suffers thus that he might be a faithful high priest complete in his experience, so that no man can say that he himself has passed through more than Jesus did. He is tried in all points like as we, and yet he is without sin. He is indeed, as the prophet said, "A man of sorrow and acquainted with grief." And this agonizing our Savior endures, not for His own sins, but for mine and for the sins of the whole world.

As the darkness of evening hastens on, and the garden in the distance begins to fade from my sight, the familiar song floats through my mind,

Night, with ebon pinion, brooded o'er the vale;  
All around was silent, save the night wind's wail,  
When Christ, the Man of Sorrows, in tears and sweat and  
blood,

Prostrate in the garden, raised his voice to God.

Smitten for offenses which were not his own,  
He, for our transgressions, had to weep alone;  
No friend with words to comfort, nor hand to help was  
there,

When the Meek and Lowly humbly bowed in prayer.

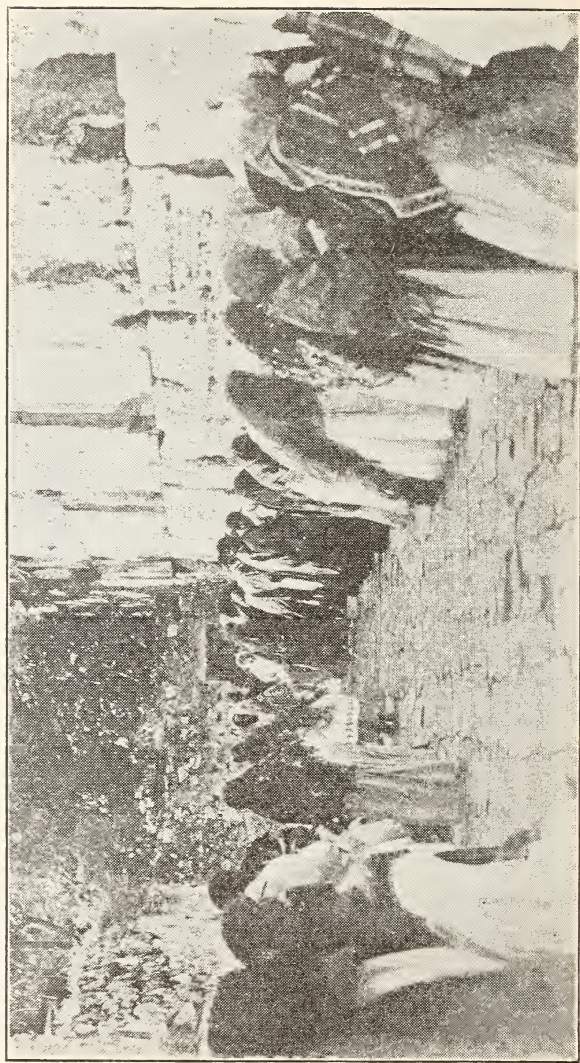
Abba, Father, Father, if indeed it may,  
Let this cup of anguish pass from me, I pray.  
Yet, if it must be suffered by me, thine only Son,  
Abba, Father, Father, let thy will be done.

THE WAILING PLACE OF  
THE JEWS

ONE OF the most touching events to be witnessed anywhere, is to be seen at the old stone wall in Jerusalem, called The Wailing Place of the Jews. This ancient wall lies at the western border of the temple plateau, and is about 50 feet high and 150 feet long. For centuries, Jews have been coming to this place to bewail the downfall of Jerusalem. On Friday evening after 4 p. m., the descendants of Abraham gather here and kiss the stones while they weep and pray. The men often sit here by the hour reading their prayer books. It is mostly the humbler class of Jews who engage in devotions here.

As one stands by and looks at these people in their lamentations over their lost estate, his mind goes back through the history of this wonderful nation and he philosophizes concerning the ills which they now bemoan. God said concerning this people that if they would obey him they should be the head of the nations and not the tail, and we know from their history that God has done what he said he would do. As long as these people





The Wailing Place of the Jews, in Jerusalem



listened to Jehovah, they were prosperous and happy; and when they disobeyed him, war and misery came. We can not but believe that the scattered and despised condition of the Jews through the past two thousand years, is due to their refusal to hear God's Son when he sent him into the world.

The Israelites had committed many sins against Jehovah, but their rejection and crucifixion of Jesus Christ was the climax of them all. Jesus showed by the works he did that he was what he claimed to be,—the Son of God. I see him as he walks among the people presenting to them the greatest lessons the world has ever heard. On the mountain top he sits down and teaches his disciples how to be blessed or happy. O how bright and cheery this world would be if the people would only listen to the beatitudes of Jesus! We see him now in the little boat pushing out from the shore and teaching the multitudes along the beach. We behold him as he opens the eyes of the blind, unstops the ears of the deaf, makes the lame to walk, and even raises the dead to life. Now he is in the temple where the people gather, and he makes known the message which he brings from God. To those who desire to do what is right, he shows by his words and works that he is what he claims to be. But the Pharisees and Sadducees and Scribes will not listen to Jesus, and stir the multitudes against him. The prominent Jews who do believe in Jesus will not acknowledge him, be-

cause they fear it will make them unpopular with the higher classes. "Among the chief rulers many believed on him, but because of the Pharisees they would not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." We see Jesus turning sadly away from them as they stop their ears to his words of wisdom and truth, and make their plots to kill him. Silently and with eyes turned down in meditation, I fancy I see the Savior—the despised and rejected One—go out of the city on the east, descend into the Valley of the Kidron, and finally ascend to the top of the Mount of Olives. There he looks down upon the city where his ancestors for a thousand years had disobeyed God most of the time, and weeps because of her hardness of heart in refusing to hear the good news which he brought from the Father above. Sorrowfully he looks forward to the calamities which are about to befall the beloved city and her people. "O Jerusalem," he sighs, "that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her own brood under her wings, and ye would not!" And looking down upon the temple which the people professed to love so well, he thought of its destruction and continued his lament, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; and I say unto you, Ye shall not see me until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Jesus is soon killed by the rulers of the Jews, but his prophecy lives on and is fulfilled. The temple is, indeed, soon made desolate, not one stone being left upon another. I see the Roman army around the city, battering down its high and strong walls. A soldier throws a firebrand into the temple, and soon the beautiful structure is a mass of flames. The entire city is destroyed and the Jews are scattered to the four winds of heaven. I see them wandering among the nations of the world, without a country, without a city, and without a temple, a hiss and a byword wherever they are. Though many of them in tolerant lands are the wealthiest of the citizens, many in other countries are subjected to every insult; and no matter what their wealth in any land there is an odium attached to the very name "Jew." Is not all this reproach which they bear a just retribution for their rejection of the Son of God?

And now we are standing at the old wall in Jerusalem where a few of the despised and scattered sons of Abraham have come to mourn over the ills of their downtrod nation. In the depths of their humiliation, they chant these doleful words,

We sit in solitude and mourn—  
 For the palace that is destroyed;  
 For the walls that are overthrown;  
 For our majesty that is departed;  
 For our great men who lie dead;  
 For the precious stones that are burned;

For the priests who have stumbled;  
For our kings who have despised Him.

We pray Thee, have mercy on Zion!—Gather the children of Jerusalem.

Haste, haste, Redeemer of Zion!—Speak to the heart of Jerusalem.

May beauty and majesty surround Zion!—Ah, turn Thyself mercifully to Jerusalem.

May the kingdom soon return to Zion!—Comfort those who mourn over Jerusalem.

May peace and joy abide with Zion!—And the branch (of Jesse) spring up at Jerusalem.

Thus do these people look forward to the Messiah, although they crucified the one and only one whom God promised to send to them. The very reason they are here weeping over their desolation is because they rejected God's only beloved Son. Grievously have they sinned against God, and grievously have they atoned for their sins.

O, why can we not, dear reader, as we stand here in this scene of distress, learn the great and important lesson of life, that "the way of the transgressor is hard"? Let us seriously ask ourselves the solemn question, "How shall we, too, escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

## MOHAMMEDANISM

SEVERAL times in these meditations I have mentioned the religion of Mohammed, and now it will be profitable for us to consider more in detail this great system of error. The founder is called Mahomet as well as Mohammed, and his followers are called also Moslems and Mussulmans. This man was born 570 A. D. at Mecca in Arabia. When he was quite young his father and mother died, and he was brought up at first by his grandfather and then by his uncle. Mohammed lived at a time when a reaction had set in among the Arabians against the idolatry which was creeping in among them, and being filled with the reactionary spirit of the times he fancied that the Lord spoke to him and urged him to warn the people against their idolatry. Mohammed was an uneducated man, and it is uncertain whether he could read or write. He was about forty years old when he began to receive revelations, and his first converts were those of his own family. The sum of this doctrine which he was to propagate was, "There is one God; and

Mohammed is his prophet." The people generally did not believe that Mohammed was a prophet, and so at the end of three years he had only forty converts. A poor showing for a divine messenger from heaven! What a difference between the origin of this religion and Christianity!

The teachings of Mahomet aroused the anger of a powerful party in the tribe of the Koreishites, who were the custodians of the sacred things in Mecca, the Holy City of the Arabians, and fearing lest they should be censured for allowing heresy to spring up in their midst, laid a plot to kill the prophet. Being warned by his followers, he fled from Mecca to Medina in the year 622. This year is called the Hegira, or Flight, and has been considered so important in the history of Islamism that all their dates are reckoned from it.

At Medina the prophet was received with more cordiality, and the success he attained there stirred his ambitious spirit more, and throwing aside the character of a mere prophet he assumed that of a warrior. Force now took the place of persuasion, and he declared that it was the will of God that the new doctrine should be propagated by the sword. Caravans were now attacked and plundered by the prophet and his followers, by which they were soon enriched. The terms offered to the unbeliever were the Koran, tribute, or the sword. Of course, most of the people accepted the Koran, for they in turn could then begin to rob their fellow beings under the guise of religion, and



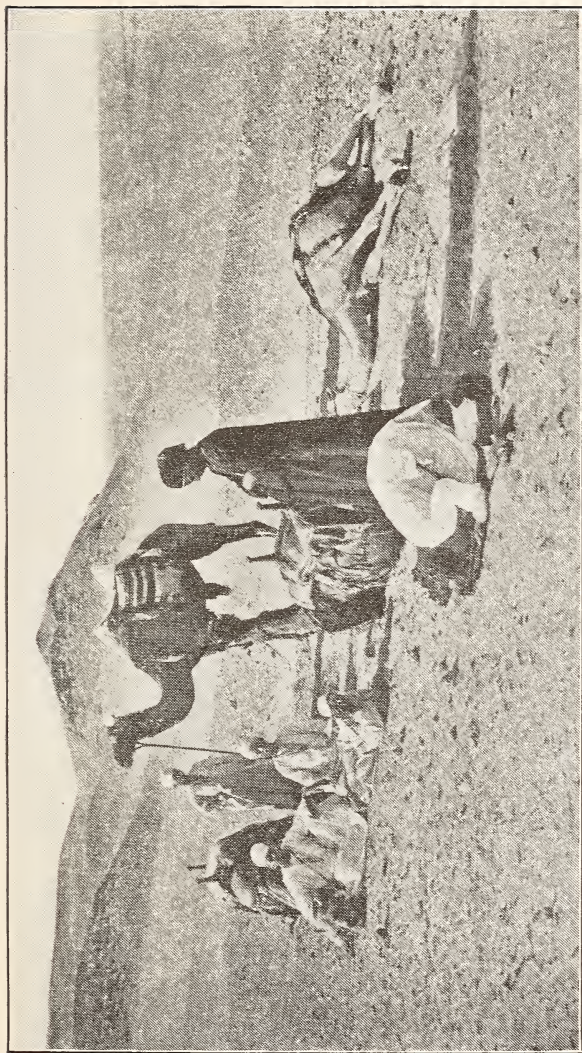
have the assurance that if they died in battle their souls would go straight to paradise. Within ten years all Arabia was brought under the power of the prophet, not only in religion but in politics as well. Mohammed lived to see only a few conquests outside the peninsula, and died in 632, in the 63d year of his life. There have been many discussions concerning this man, for the former and latter parts of his life form such strange inconsistencies. The first part of his life was spent in harmless dreaming, and the last part in killing those who would not accept his claims. Historians say he was subject to some bodily or mental disorder. Whatever we may think of him, we must say that he has left his mark in the world, for after 1,200 years there are hundreds of millions of people who believe that "There is one God; and Mohammed is his prophet."

The Koran is the Mohammedan bible, and the orthodox believers in it teach that from all eternity it was written on tablets in heaven, and the angel Gabriel revealed it to the prophet. Mohammed gave it to the people little by little as it was revealed to him, and after the death of the prophet these parts were gathered together and arranged chiefly according to length. The history in the Koran is derived from the Old Testament mixed with traditions and fables from other sources. They say that God has revealed himself through four holy men, Moses, David, Jesus and Mohammed, the last of whom is the greatest of all. To

the first he gave the pentateuch; to the second, the Psalms; to the third, the gospels; to the fourth, the Koran. The Arabian Mohammedans claim to be descended from Abraham through Ishmael, and so they reverence very highly this patriarch.

When the firmament was created, a class of beings was formed called jinn, or demons, which occupy a rank between men and angels; some of them believing and some of them not. In the course of time many fables grew up respecting these demons, and belief in them is very general today. When these demons became arrogant, they were banished to the mountains surrounding the earth, whence they make incursions into this world. Adam was created on the evening of the sixth day, and for that reason Friday is the Sabbath of the Moslems. After the creation of Adam, the angel who banished the demons, refused to bow down before Adam, and so was himself exiled and is known henceforth as the devil.

Mohammed claims that Christ prophesied of his coming, but that these passages have been eliminated from the gospels. He claims to be the Paraclete, or Comforter, mentioned in John 16: 16. His system of religion was to supersede the Jewish and Christian, and he evaded the necessity of performing miracles to prove his doctrine by saying that his whole system was a miracle, and that it needed no special signs. After his death, however, miracles were attributed to him.



Mohammedans in the Desert, Two of Whom are Praying Toward Mecca

The morality of the Mohammedan Arabs contains some good points. Of the duty of man to man, charity is the most praised in the Koran, and thus hospitality is much practised among them, especially the Beduins, the wandering tribes. Frugality is a virtue of the Arabs, but too often it descends into covetousness. Lending money on interest is forbidden by the Koran, but it is practised to a great extent, the lowest rate in Syria being twelve per cent. Mohammed prohibited his followers from using intoxicating drinks, nevertheless the upper classes drink freely, especially the Turks. Polygamy is sanctioned among them, a man being permitted to have four wives at a time; but because of the expense of running several families in different houses and the trouble which results in placing several wives in the same house, most of the men practise monogamy. Very few of the men remain single. Divorce is easily obtained among these religionists, owing, no doubt, to Mohammed's personal practices. A single word from a husband is sufficient to banish a wife from the house, although she still retains the dowry she has received from her husband. The children are taught strict obedience to their parents.

The repetitions of prayers is one of the chief occupations of the faithful Moslems, which they get almost entirely from the Koran. Five times a day they turn their faces toward Mecca, their holy city, and go through their maneuvers of bow-

ing and kneeling and prostrating themselves. One might think that they would get tangled in the directions and sometimes get their backs to Mecca instead of their faces, but they prepare for this by carrying the compass with them. Washing before prayers is a requirement, and every mosque has a tank in it for that purpose. In the desert where water can not be obtained, sand may be used for the purpose.

The observance of the Fast of the Month Ramadan is another important duty of the Moslem. From daybreak till sunset, eating and drinking are absolutely forbidden, but they make up for the fast by a feast when night comes. As the Arabian year is lunar, this fast comes sometimes in summer, which makes it very hard on the people to go the whole day without water.

Every Mohammedan is bound once in his life to undertake a pilgrimage to Mecca. When near the holy city, they lay aside their clothes, even their head-gear, and put on aprons and a piece of cloth over the left shoulder. The Kaaba at Mecca, which is the object of the pilgrimage, is a shrine supposed to have been built by Abraham and containing a black stone about seven inches long fabled to be a ruby from heaven. To kiss this stone is one of the greatest events in the life of a Moslem. Pilgrimages are also made to the graves of their saints, and the traveler today sees many shreds of cloth tied to the iron grating con-



neeted with the tomb, which have been placed there by the faithful pilgrims.

Many of the Mohammedan customs are interesting. They practise circumcision as do the Jews, performing the operation when the boy is six or seven years old. Girls are generally married in their twelfth or thirteenth, and sometimes even in their tenth year. A boy does not see his bride before the wedding day, she being selected for him by a friend or relative. The young man must pay for his wife, two-thirds of the purchase money going to the father of the bride and the other third is to be given to the wife when the husband dies or divorces her against her will. Before the wedding the bride is conducted through the streets with great ceremony. The procession is headed with musicians who are followed by some of the married relatives and friends of the bride, and then young girls. The bride is entirely covered by a shawl. The procession moves by slowly and other musicians bring up the rear. Afterwards the bride is conducted with the same ceremony to the house of her husband.

A Mohammedan funeral is as interesting as a wedding. When one dies, the body is washed and then mourned over by the relatives and the professional mourning-women. The schoolmaster reads by his side a few passages from the Koran, the ears and nostrils of the body are filled with cotton, and the body is wrapped in a white or green sheet. The foremost persons in the pro-



cession are several poor and generally blind men, who chant the creed, "There is but one God; and Mohammed is his prophet. God be merciful to him and preserve him." The coffin is carried by friends, after which the women relatives follow with dishevelled hair, sobbing aloud, sometimes accompanied by the professional mourning women. The procession goes to the mosque where prayers are offered for the dead, and then moves to the cemetery where the body is buried with the head toward Mecca. The heaven to which the faithful Mohammedan expects to go is a sensual one, a place filled with flowers and fruit and everything delightful to the senses, and where black-eyed houries of ravishing beauty await the faithful Mohammedan men.

Such in brief is the origin, belief, and customs of the followers of the Arabian prophet. Though there are some good features in the doctrines of Mahomet (what religious system in the world has not some good points?), still every nation which has adopted its principles is far down in the scale of civilization. "Many of the tenets of Islam," says Myers, the historian, "are most unfavorable to human liberty, progress, and improvement. It teaches fatalism, and thus paralyzes the will of man and discourages effort and enterprise. It removes God to an inconceivable distance from humanity, denies all possibility of communion and sympathy between the human soul and the Infinite Spirit, and thus represses all spiritual aspiration

and growth. It consecrates sensuality, and thus sinks its devotees into the lowest degradation. It allows polygamy and puts no restraint upon divorce, and thus destroys the sanctity of the family life. It shuts up women in the harem, and thus deprives all classes of the elevating and refining influences of social intercourse. It permits slavery, and is the foster parent of despotism. It inspires a blind and bigoted hatred of race and creed, and thus puts far out of sight the salutary truth of the brotherhood of men. It gives a 'dead revelation' to man, a revelation in which there is no vitality, no power of expansion, no capacity to adapt itself to new human wants, and which thus bars every avenue of social or individual progress and improvement. Because of these and other only less prominent defects in its teachings, Islam has proved a blight and a curse to every race embracing its sterile doctrines."

Infidels have displayed the weakness of their cause by trying to show that Mohammedanism and Christianity have arisen in much the same way. There really is no comparison between the two systems of religion. Jesus Christ performed miracles to substantiate his doctrines, as the credible gospel records tell us; but Mohammed did not claim to do such though his followers claim some for him. The New Testament comes to us from eight different men, and their testimony unites in forming one great system; the Koran came from one man, and could easily have been an imposture. The heaven

to which the Christian looks is pure and ennobling; but the heaven to which the Moslem looks is sensual and degrading. As long as Mohammed used only persuasion, he had few followers; Jesus never used anything else and had many disciples in his personal career. When Mohammed began to use the temporal sword, his following increased; the true disciples of Jesus only used the spiritual sword, the Word of God, and they soon had preached the gospel to every nation, aided by the Holy Spirit. The Arabian prophet offered plunder to those who would become his disciples; Jesus offered poverty and persecution to his. The Mohammedan movement was simply a temporal conquest with religion and plunder as an incentive; the propagation of the gospel was entirely spiritual with love for all mankind as the moving principle. The teachings of Mahomet have been a curse wherever they have gone; but the teachings of Jesus have been a blessing. What a difference there is between these two great systems of religion! He who can say that because Mohammed was an impostor, therefore Jesus was, shows that he lacks that important quality of mind called comparison. Infidels are ever ready to accept the blessings which Christianity offers them, but I believe they hate it so because they are not willing to conform their lives to the strict morality which it demands. Let infidelity to the religion of Jesus do something for the world, and then we shall believe that there is something in it.

CHRISTIANITY OF THE FIRST  
AND TWENTIETH CEN-  
TURIES COMPARED

WHILE it is true that a trip to Palestine,—to its hills and cities and rivers and lakes and valleys,—is of great interest and benefit to the Bible student; still there are some things connected with such a trip which make his heart sad. When he thinks of the difference between the Christianity of the twentieth century and that of the first, he can not but be saddened at the contrast. What superstition and worldliness he sees today; what division and confusion, when there should be oneness!

The Roman Catholic Church and her elder sisters, the Greek Catholic, Coptic and Armenian churches, are a disgrace to the pure religion of Jesus Christ. I call these churches the elder sisters of the Roman, because they existed before she did. Rome, of course, will deny this, but it is true nevertheless. There is no Roman Catholic Church without the pope as universal head of the church, and he was never anything like that until

about the sixth century. These other churches began before that. All the early councils of the mass of the professed Christians were Greek and not Roman, and were controlled by the Greeks, and thus we may say that the Greek Church began before the Roman. As the Coptic and Armenian churches began before the bishop of Rome had complete power over the mass of the churches, we must say that these are older than the Roman Church. And as these all hold in common many superstitions and corruptions from the gospel, we may safely call them sisters.

The adoration of "sacred" places and things is one of the greatest evils in the Christian world. God does not recognize such things under the New Covenant. The performances carried on at Bethlehem at the spot where they say Christ was born, are unscriptural and repellant to the Bible student. The same may be said of the doings at the spot in Jerusalem where they say He was crucified and buried. And so it is with so many places throughout Palestine. The worship of the Virgin Mary by the Roman Catholic Church and her sisters in superstition, is one of the most unscriptural practices which they have. No doubt a thousand times more prayers are offered to her than to God himself. She has become a kind of god with them. The pictures and statues which the traveler sees in the churches of these people, not only in Palestine, but throughout Europe and even America, make the intelligent tourist sad because of the

superstition. Besides the worship of Mary, there is the worship of the saints. There are so many of these characters that the days sacred to them fill up the year. In every Romish church there are pictures and images of Mary and the different saints which are worshiped by the people. The Roman people may deny that they worship these images, but when they bow before them with clasped hands, and offer their prayers to the original through them, are they not doing the same thing that the heathen do when they pray to their gods through their idols? The Roman Catholic Church and her sisters in superstition can not vindicate themselves from the charge of idolatry. And then to think that their priest claims to change the bread into the actual body of Christ, and thus that they make God out of a piece of dough! This is too much for a sensible and Bible-loving people to believe. Besides these things, their priests teach that they can forgive sins. What blasphemy it is for men to assume to themselves that power which belongs to God alone! It is because this doctrine has been imbedded so deeply in the minds of their people that the clergy has such power over them. But time fails me to tell of all the unscriptural and superstitious practices of the Roman and kindred churches. When one sees their practices in their native soil, and contrasts them with the teachings of those Christians who protest against them, he is led to exclaim, "O Protestantism, with all thy faults, I love thee



still!" What a difference there is between Romanism and the Christianity of the first century!

But not only do we see a contrast between the Christianity of Romanism and that of the New Testament, but we see also a great difference between our loved Protestantism and the teachings of Christ as found in the New Covenant. The principles of Romanism and Protestantism are different in this respect that the former claims to follow tradition as well as the Bible, while the latter claims to follow the Bible alone. But the serious question is, Are we Protestants following the Bible as we claim to, and have we the authority of Christ for all that we are doing? The traditions of Rome have had a great influence on Protestantism, much more than we think. When the Reformers came out of "Babylon," they brought with them many of the practices they learned there. They did, perhaps, the very best they could under the circumstances, but there were some things they learned which they could not unlearn. Where do we get the distinction between clergy and laity? If this is taught in the New Testament, where can it be found? Where do we find that God gave the authority to uninspired men to meet in councils, synods, general assemblies, conferences, associations and conventions, to make laws to govern the people? Inspired men met in a council in apostolic times, but there is a wide difference between their decisions and those of a company of uninspired men. Did not God give us the New Testament as

a perfect law book for all time? What right, then, have we to make other laws? These are serious questions for us to ask ourselves. And do not the different denominations have forms of church government which are different from that portrayed in the New Testament? What right have we to make the change? Our church worship and work, are they, too, carried on according to the pattern of the apostolic church? Where did we get the observance of Christmas and Easter? Did we not get them from the great apostasy from the Word of God, and are they not festivals which are a mixture of heathenism, Judaism and Christianity? Did Christ and the apostles practise infant baptism, or did we get that, too, from Rome? Did not the apostolic church practise immersion only, and did not even the Roman Catholic Church practise it until the thirteenth century? Have we a right to change the baptism which Christ commanded? Did the New Testament church have instrumental music in its worship; and if not, have we a right to add that and other things to the simple singing which He commands, and turn the worship of God into a concert? Should Christians today raise money by church fairs, festivals, rummage sales, cantatas, and many other such things? Are buying and selling and playing and begging from the world, part of the religion of Jesus? Are all these practices warranted by Christ, and are we following him when we mix them with what he has taught? He warns us against departures from his

Word by saying, "In vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." (Matt. 15: 9.)

The earnest man who wants to please his Lord, asks the question, How may I know how to select the truth from all the teachings and practices of the religious people about me? Our only answer can be, Go to the New Testament and measure all things by it. Let us, then, for a few moments, go to the New Covenant to see what it says about the Church which Christ established.

*Its Name.*—Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build *my* Church," (Matt. 16: 18). and Paul speaks of the "churches [congregations] of Christ," (Rom. 16: 16). This institution is also called "Church of God," (1 Cor. 1: 2); "Church of the Firstborn," (Heb. 12: 23). The people who compose this church are called Christians and disciples, (Acts 11: 26); saints, (1 Cor. 1: 2); brethren, (1 Cor. 1: 26). All names not found in the Scripture are human and cause division, hence they should not be worn by Christians.

*Its Creed.*—The teachings of Christ and his inspired apostles as found in the New Testament constitute its creed, or belief. To mix our own notions and the traditions of men with the teachings of Christ is to render our worship vain, for God says through Christ, "In vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." (Matt. 15: 9, R. V.)

*Entrance into It.*—"Except one be *born* of water and the Spirit he cannot *enter into* the kingdom of God." (John 3: 5.) "Having been *begotten* again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through *the word of God* which liveth and abideth." (1 Pet. 1: 23.) To be begotten by the word of God, and to be born, or begotten, by the Spirit, are the same. All commentators of any note say that to be born of water refers to baptism. When we permit the word of God which comes by the Spirit of God to sink into our hearts producing faith and repentance, we have been begotten again, but our birth is not yet complete. When we have gone on in our obedience and been baptized, then it is that our birth is completed and we have been born of water and the Spirit, and have come *into* the kingdom, or Church of God. Paul asks, "Are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized *into* Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6: 3); and again, "For as many of you as were baptized *into* Christ, did put on Christ." (Gal. 3: 27.) These scriptures teach us that baptism, preceded by faith and repentance, is the act which brings us *into* Christ. But what is baptism? Bible baptism requires "*much water,*" (John 3: 23); going "*down into the water,*" (Acts 8: 38); *burial*, (Rom. 6: 4; Col. 2: 12); coming "*up out of the water,*" (Acts 8: 39). Jesus says that we must be born of water. Can a babe be born of a mother smaller than itself? Neither can we be born of a body of water smaller than ourselves. We come

out of the water into the spiritual world very much as we come into the natural world.

*Its government.*—Jesus Christ is absolute King and the New Testament is his law book. The Old Testament is inspired of God, but is not a book of authority for Christians. Christ has ordained that elders, called also overseers and bishops, look after the local congregations, (1 Tim. 3: 1-7; Titus 1: 5-9; Acts 20: 28); and that deacons be servants of the churches, (Acts 6; 1 Tim. 3: 8-10). Evangelists are to go from place to place preaching the gospel. The churches of the New Testament were not under the councils, associations, synods, general assemblies and conferences of uninspired men, but under the teaching of the inspired apostles. Their church government was congregational. The pastor system in which one man rules the congregation instead of the elders, was unknown to the New Testament.

*Its Work.*—The work of Christ's Church consists in helping its own poor and sick, in doing good unto all men, and in advancing the gospel. The aid work of the New Testament Church was done as individual Christians, (Acts 9: 36-42; Gal. 6: 10); and as congregations, (Acts 11: 27-30). The gospel was preached in two ways,—all true Christians preached the gospel in private, trying to save others besides themselves, (Acts 8: 4); and evangelists publicly proclaimed the gospel, living on the voluntary contributions of the brethren and churches, (1 Cor. 9: 14; Phil. 4: 14-16). The early

Christians had no aid societies to do the work of helping the poor and sick, which *every* Christian should be interested in; they did not have any Endeavor societies to train young people, for parents were to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and when they became Christians they came under the watchful care of the elders of the congregations as well as their parents; they had no missionary societies to preach the gospel, for *every* Christian was to do all he could for the spread of the gospel in public or private. These societies are organizations different from the Church, though they are attached to it, for they have different laws, treasures, officers, etc. The truth that a person who has not been baptized may belong to the C. E. Society, shows that it is different from the church. Those who work in these societies go contrary to that scripture which says, "Unto him [God] be glory *in the church.*" (Eph. 3: 21.)

*Its Worship.*—The early Christians "continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers," they were to teach and admonish "one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God." (Acts 2: 42; Col. 3: 17.) They had no organs, pianos, fiddles, horns, etc., to make music in their worship, for all these make a kind of music which God has not commanded, and hence such music is an addition to God's Word.



*Its Finances.*—Paul commanded Christians to *give*, upon the first day of the week, freely and liberally, (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2; 2 Cor. 8: 9.) They did not raise money by festivals, “Old Maids’ Conventions,” “Distric Sculs,” cantatas, Santa Claus performances, Tom Thumb weddings, ankle shows, box suppers, rafflings, etc., and a hundred other devices used by the religious world generally.

As we now turn our eyes from the church of the first century to that of the twentieth, we see a great difference; and the question comes to us, Does God endorse this difference? Many say that he does, and that it matters not whether we serve Him according to the New Testament or not. They tell us that we must keep up with the times in religious affairs just as we do in temporal matters. If the religion of Jesus were an evolution like modes of travel, farming, etc., and not a perfect revelation, we might conclude that there is something in such reasoning; but there are too many places in God’s Word where he has warned us against departures from his laws. It is these departures which have produced the divisions among the followers of Jesus. We are not divided over what is in the Bible, but over what is not there. If we would permit the New Testament to explain itself, and do those things and only those things which the Lord enjoins, we should all be one as he commanded his disciples to be. In teaching and practising things unauthorized by God’s Word, we are not only doing that which

is producing and perpetuating division, but we are placing ourselves under the anathema of heaven. Paul says concerning the simplicity that is in Christ, the very thing which we have just portrayed from the New Testament, "I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ." (2 Cor. 11: 3.) With such a warning as this from the pen of the inspired Paul, how can we truly say that it matters not whether we do just what the Lord has commanded and in the way he has enjoined? When the Galatian brethren mixed the old law with the gospel, Paul said they were teaching a perverted gospel, and uttered then these awful words, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that ye received, let him be anathema." (Gal. 1: 8, 9.) What would Paul say to you and me today, if we bring over into our worship some of David's customs, or bring in from the world many of its practices? Do we not rest under the same condemnation as those Galatian brethren? When we turn to the last chapter of the last book of the Bible and the last words, we find this woe pronounced upon those who change in any wise the teachings of Christ, "If any man shall add unto them [the Scriptures]

God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the books of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book." (Rev. 22:18, 19.) Thus the last words of God's revelation to man are a warning against the very thing of departing from God's plan, which so many today consider such a small thing to do. Oh, my eternity-bound friend, let us diligently study God's Word that we may know just what he requires of us, and then let us do it just as he has commanded, so that he will not charge to us this unholy division among his people and will not condemn us in the last great day because we have corrupted the gospel of Christ.

## THE NEW JERUSALEM

OUR VISIT to the land of our Lord and to the city from which our religion came is about to end, and now we are looking for the last time upon these scenes so often mentioned in sacred history. We have sailed upon the lake upon which our Savior sailed, and upon which he walked to his disciples when the waves were troubled. We have stood upon the banks of the Jordan where John preached, and where he baptized the Son of God. We have climbed to the tops of hills and mountains, and looked over the same land over which the inspired prophets and apostles looked, so many ages ago. We have walked in the valleys and by the little streams and wells mentioned so many times in sacred lore; and we have picked our way among the ruins of great and mighty cities of former days. And now, as we are about to take our journey toward the west, we gaze in solemn meditation for a few moments upon these historic scenes.

Jerusalem lies before me with its walls and valleys and narrow streets and buildings as of

yore. I see the city as she has been, the city of one nation, the descendants of Abraham. I see the throne of David in the midst of the city, and his children for hundreds of years swaying the sceptre over this wonderful people. I see the temple which Solomon built, in all its beauty and magnificence. I behold with sad thoughts the wickedness among the people of this city. Liars and thieves and murderers and reprobates of all kinds are to be found in this sacred place. I see the people working while it is day, but when night comes they hide away in their homes, for they have no light to guide them in their toil. An opposing army comes, surrounds the city, beats down the walls, kills the young men, and carries the maidens away into captivity with the gold and silver they can find. I see the pestilence coming down upon the people, carrying with it greater dismay than the sword of the enemy and working greater destruction without a battle. I weep as I think of the hearts that have been broken here of fathers and mothers and sons and daughters and husbands and wives, in the ages that are gone. I look with sadness upon the millions of this city who in ages past have gathered at the beds of dying friends and wept as the spirits of their loved ones took their flight. These are some of the sad events which have happened here in the city of Jerusalem; and what has happened here has happened in all cities of antiquity and in all cities of modern times.

As I gaze and muse, I lift my eyes and see another city, so different from the one which lies before me now. It is so large!—even beyond the comprehension of finite man. It is a city, not for one but for all the nations of the world. There is no sin there, no pride nor greed nor tyranny,—but all is just and pure and good. The throne there is not the throne of a mortal man, but the throne of Him who is from everlasting to everlasting—God. There is no temple there, but Christ and God are the temple thereof. There is no darkness there, no night, for the Lord God shall be their light. No more war, for Satan and his army are banished into the lake of fire prepared for them from the beginning. No pestilence there to sweep the blessed away, but they shall live forever and forever. No heartaches there, nor tears nor pain nor death, for the things of sinful earth have passed away.

There the wicked have ceased from troubling,  
And the weary are at rest.

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away. \* \* And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and





The New Jerusalem, Through an Eye of Faith

be their God. And he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more; for the first things are passed away. \* \* \* He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I shall be his God, and he shall be my son. But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and soocerers, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death. \* \* \* And the twelve gates are twelve pearls; each one of the several gates was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof. And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb. \* \* \* And there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie; but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life. And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that, was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no curse any more; and the throne

of God and of the Lamb shall be therein; and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever. \* \* \* Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city. Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie.”

Beautiful Zion built above—  
Beautiful city that I love;  
Beautiful gates of pearly white;  
Beautiful temple—God its light!  
He was slain on Calvary  
Opens those pearly gates to me.

Beautiful heaven, where all is light,  
Beautiful angels clothed in white,  
Beautiful strains that never tire,  
Beautiful harps through all the choir!  
There shall I join the chorus sweet,  
Worshiping at the Savior's feet.

Beautiful crowns on every brow,  
Beautiful palms the conquerors show,  
Beautiful robes the ransomed wear,  
Beautiful all who enter there!  
Thither I press with eager feet;  
There shall my rest be long and sweet.

Beautiful throne for Christ our King;  
Beautiful songs the angels sing;  
Beautiful rest—all wanderings cease;  
Beautiful home of perfect peace!  
There shall my eyes the Savior see:  
Haste to this heavenly home with me.

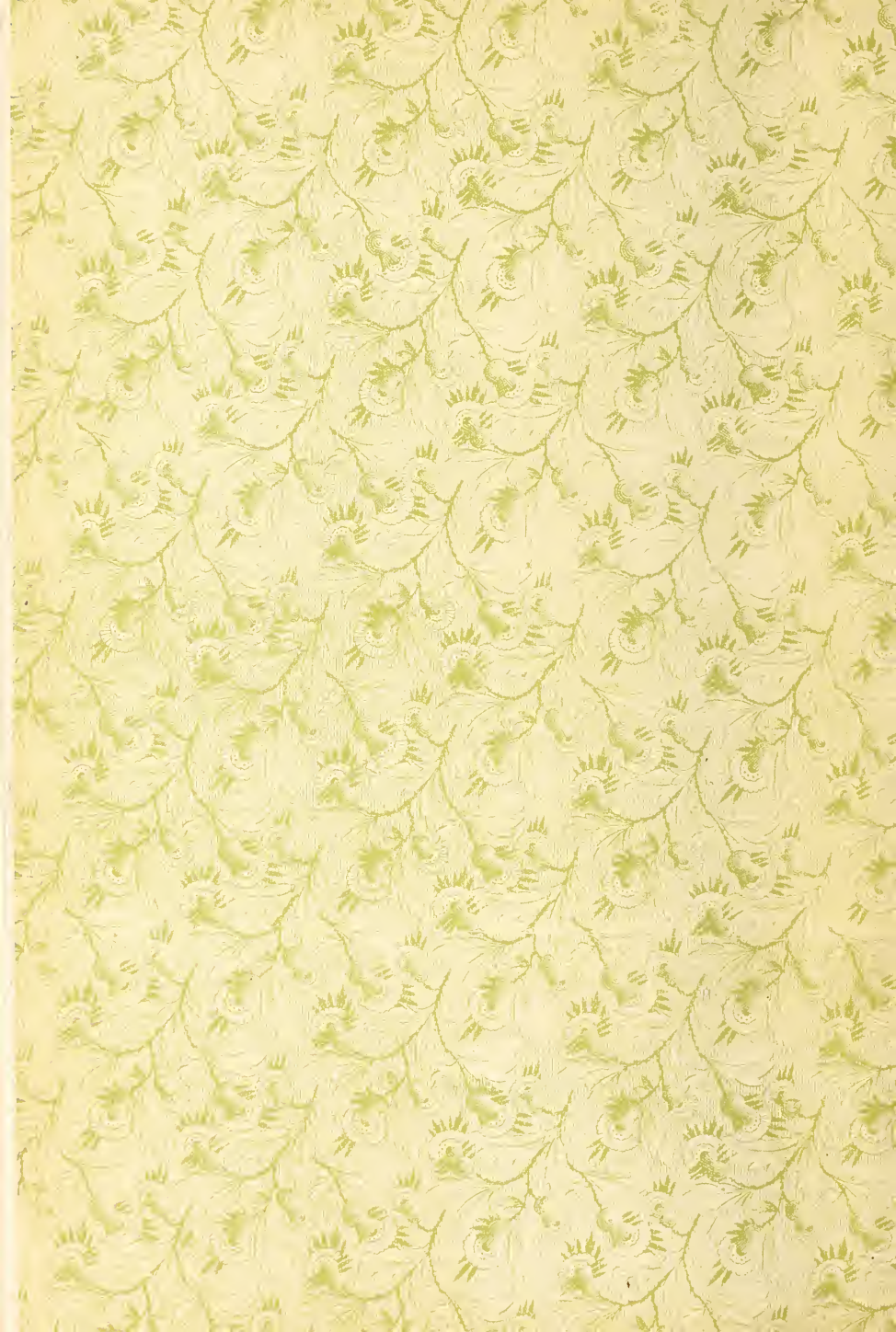





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